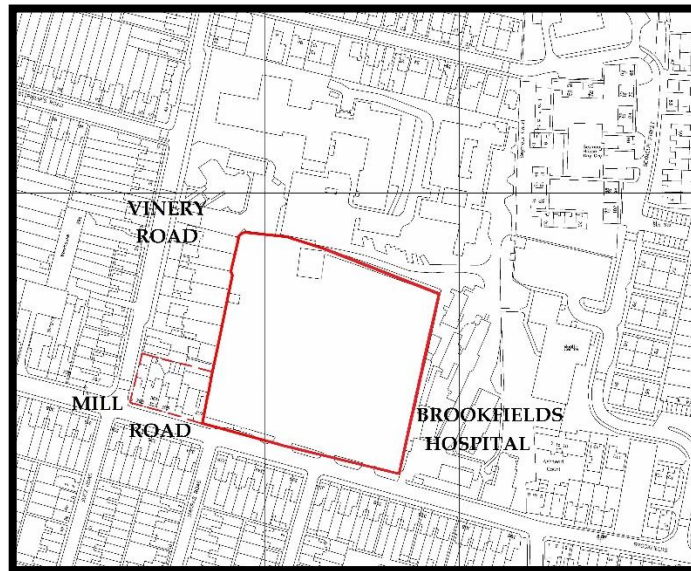


MILL ROAD HISTORY SOCIETY

SITE REPORT

299–349 Mill Road, Romsey Town, Cambridge

The Development of the
'Magnet' and 'Holland Motors' Sites



John McGill

The Mill Road History Society was formed in 2015 to continue the work of the HLF-funded Mill Road History Project (2013–2015). One of the Project’s principal products was a series of twelve building or site reports, researched and produced by volunteers. These were published in print form for limited deposit, and on the website www.capturingcambridge.org. The present report is the second produced by the Society since it took over that aspect of the Project’s work.

In a small number of cases we regret that it has not been possible to cite the sources of information given in this report.

First edition – 2018

Author : John McGill

Cove image: Recent map of site, with alterations by author

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Abbreviations

CA:	Cambridgeshire Archives
CC:	Cambridgeshire Collection (Central Library)
<i>CEN</i>	<i>Cambridge Evening News</i>
<i>CN</i>	<i>Cambridge News</i>
CRM	Corporate Residential Management Ltd
EMRAG	East Mill Road Action Group
NHS	National Health Service
O/S	Ordnance Survey
PBSA	Purpose Built Student Accommodation
TCG	The Co-operative Group

NOTE

I should like to thank Allan Brigham for information provided, and for reviewing this report, also Kirstie Brooks for much useful information. My gratitude goes also to the staffs of the Cambridgeshire Archives and the Cambridgeshire Collection for their constant help in supplying relevant documents.

Location

299–349 Mill Road is a site on the north side of Mill Road in Romsey Town, Cambridge, located between Vinery Road and Brooks Road.

National Grid reference (median)

TL 472576
 547226, 257645
 52.1974, 0.1527
 52° 11' 51' N 0° 09' 10' E

CONTEXT

Romsey Town has been developed, piece by piece, from rural to urban uses since at least the late 1870s. Prior to that, the area was agricultural land (as has been recorded in other local history documents). Most of the streets in the core of Romsey Town – running off north and south from Mill Road – have been built up with houses dating from the late Victorian and Edwardian periods, with inter-war (1930s) houses on the periphery – the Perne Road/Brooks Road, Greville Road, and Coldham's Lane neighbourhoods. The town is primarily a residential area characterised by small terraced family houses. Mill Road itself, particularly to the west, is lined with commercial uses – small shops and businesses.

In the city-wide context, Cambridge has been experiencing, especially over the last decade, an economic and associated building boom. Sites throughout the city which have been identified as under-used have been re-developed, often for new housing, apartments or hotels; the outskirts have seen the building of new neighbourhoods.

Indeed, any space which is perceived as having the potential for development, invariably comes up in the City Council's planning website as being subject to a planning application. The generous back gardens of many inter-war houses are readily targeted for infill. The fabric of many an existing dwelling is appraised for its potential for extension – outwards or upwards.

Nonetheless, partly due to the praiseworthy defence of the green belt, space in the city for new development is limited, and this has an impact on Romsey. Here, a cursory glance of large potential sites in the vicinity might take in the following:

- The City Council depot west of the railway/east of Kingston Street
- The Travis Perkins site off Devonshire Road
- The Ridgeon's site off Cromwell Road.

All of these sites have been (March 2018) earmarked for re-development, with Development Briefs prepared by the City Council planning department. (A Development Brief is a document, usually based on local consultation, intended to indicate how a local planning authority would prefer a site to be developed – its uses, density of use and appearance, among other matters. Such a Brief, however, is not legally binding – a developer can propose, and be granted, planning permission to develop such a site for other uses, densities and appearance.)

This report focusses primarily on Nos 309–313 and 315–349 Mill Road, the two adjoining sites which were until recently perhaps the only sites remaining on Mill Road which had ready potential for major re-development. Both sites are now undergoing re-development.

A Development Brief was drawn up for these sites in 2007¹ – the Robert Sayle and Co-Op Site, Mill Road – though actual development proposals have deviated somewhat from what was envisaged. This is addressed in Section II, below.

Part of the land, however, was covered by Part 2 to *Site Options Within and on the Edge of Cambridge* of the Draft Cambridge Local Plan 2014, which set out the desirable uses – mainly residential with employment and community uses. As stated, both sites are currently (March 2018) being re-developed: 309–313 as a mosque, and 315–349 as student accommodation.

¹ "Development Brief": Robert Sayle Warehouse & Co-op Site, Mill Road Cambridge. Development Brief for Proposals Site 7.12 in the Cambridge Local Plan (2006). Prepared by the Cambridge City Council Urban Design Team. July 2007.



Figure 1 – Nos 309–313 and 315–349 Mill Road (c.2000)

In Figure 1 above, the Holland Motors site can be seen with two large, white sheds, and the Magnet/Robert Sayle site with the large grey-green roof. Mill Road runs from top to bottom on middle-right.

This report also takes in the changing uses, and development, of Nos 299–307 Mill Road, a collection of small properties fronting Mill Road, which lie in the south west corner of the overall block – bounded by Mill Road and Vinery Road. This is intended to give an overall picture of development in the vicinity.

I. THE HISTORY OF THE SITE

Taken as one parcel of land, Nos 309–313 and 315–349 Mill Road is a brown-field site. The land, originally agricultural, has been occupied by a series of commercial, entertainment and industrial uses for over a hundred years, the only residences being associated with those uses. The combined sites lay idle for a number of years in the late 1990s/early 2000s, and are currently being transformed.

a: 1884 to 1888

Spalding's Directories

1884: going along the north side of Mill Road from the west to the east, the directory records the following:

- Vinery Road
- 'Site of the hospital for infectious diseases'
- Cherry Hinton fields.

This recording of occupation was undertaken during the development of Romsey Town. Many of the streets on the west side – running west from Thoday Street to the railway – were in the process of being built up (see Figure 5, below). East of this notional line, the streets had largely been laid out, yet actual building was piece-meal – the land fronting on to the streets being divided into lots which were then sold and built upon either individually, in pairs or in terraces.

In 1884 Vinery Road was laid out, though sparsely built-up, and only fields (or open land) lie between the road and the site for the Infectious Diseases Hospital, beyond which lie the Cherry Hinton fields. Cambridge Corporation had evidently bought the site for the hospital that year, and construction may or may not have commenced.

1887: there has been further development:

- Vinery Road
- The Corner House
- Field
- The Sanatorium (Hospital for Infectious Diseases), Phillips junr., resident inspector
- Building land
- The first brook.

The house (still standing) that stands at the corner of Vinery Road and Mill Road has been built. Yet the site of Nos 309–313 and 315–349 is still a field. Beyond the Sanatorium the land is recorded as 'building land', seemingly implying that some form of construction work was underway or being prepared. The 'first brook' is a watercourse that wasn't (or isn't) connected to Cherry Hinton Brook and is probably now culverted and lying largely beneath Brooks Road.

Ordnance Survey and other maps

Originally the land was under agriculture. The 1830 Baker map shows the land around Mill Road laid out as fields, with Polecat Farm lying on the south side of the road. The field lay-out provides the approximate location of Nos 309–313 and 315–349 with Vinery Road

seemingly being laid out along a field boundary. Whether the land was part of Polecat Farm or another has not been determined.



Figure 2 – Showing the approximate location of Nos 309–313 and 315–349 in 1830
(Baker map, 1830, taken from Brigham, 2015)

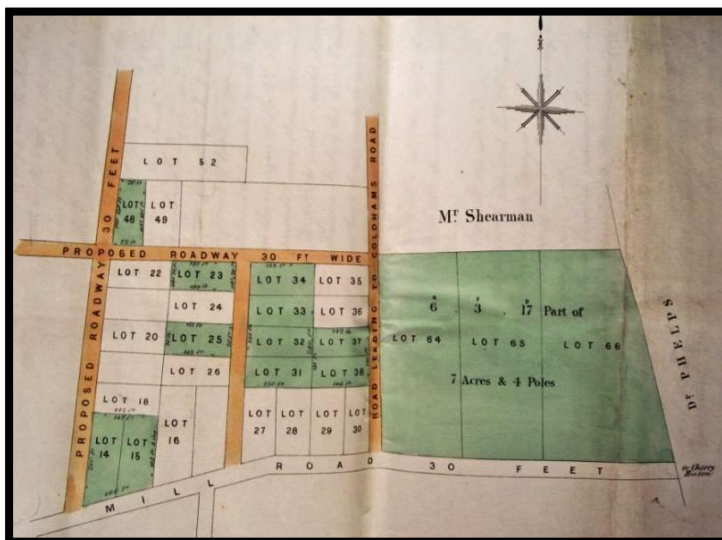


Figure 3 – Map showing land bought by Francis Thoday in 1879
(Deeds: Hemingford House: in private possession)

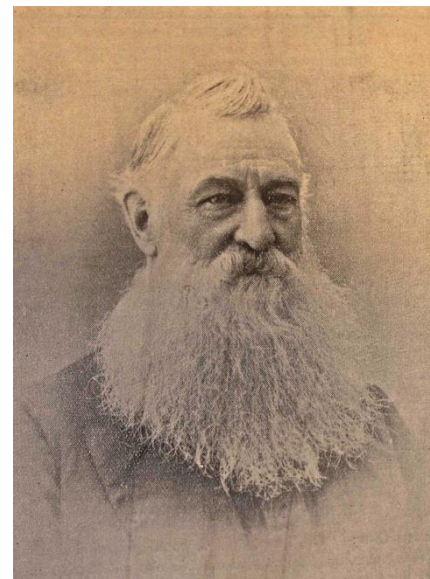


Figure 4 – Francis Thoday
(CC: Cambridge Graphic)

As Allan Brigham points out in his study of the development of Hemingford Road, much of the land on and around Mill Road was sold off in 1879 when the Romsey Cottage and farm estate was broken up. The map above, taken from Brigham's study, shows the extent of the estate purchased by Francis Thoday (shaded green), seemingly in anticipation of the development of the area. Notable is the large block on the right – lots 64, 65 and 66. Lots 64 and 65 conform with what was to become Nos 309–313 and 315–349 Mill Road, while lot 66 conforms with the land acquired by Cambridge Corporation for the hospital/sanatorium.

It may be noticed that the small block of lots that now occupies the south-west corner of lot 64 (what is now Nos 299 to 307 Mill Road) is not there. These were excised in the 1890s, sold by Mr Thoday as a map supplied by Brigham clearly indicates:

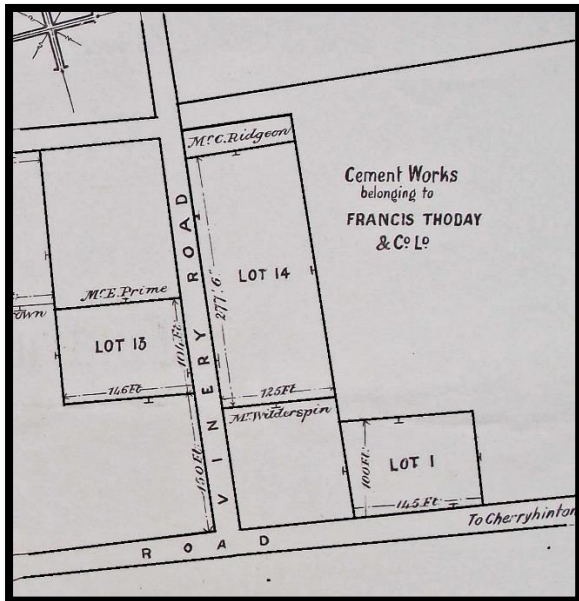


Figure 5 – 1890s map of sale of lot 1 fronting Mill Road, and lot 14 fronting Vinery Road
(CA: croc.ms.191_5_7.Lot 51)

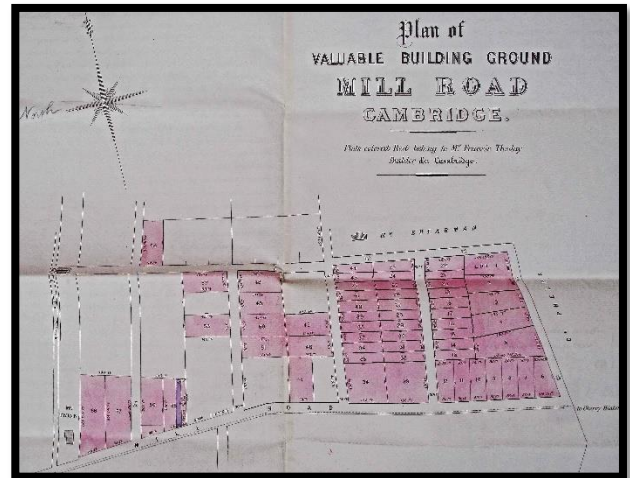


Figure 6 – Thoday's proposal for sub-division of Nos 309–349 into 44 lots, and a new road
(CA: croc.ms.191_5_7.Lot 51)

Figure 5 (detail of a larger map showing fourteen lots for sale lying between Catherine (*sic*) Street and Vinery Road) shows lots 14 and 1 as being sold out of the larger lot 64 in Figure 3 above. Lot 1 would be later developed into Nos 305/307 Mill Road, and lot 14 would eventually accommodate Nos 6 to 16 Vinery Road and part of the Brookfields Hospital site. Noticeable is that the block at the corner of Mill and Vinery roads has already been excised and is under the name of Mr Wilderspin, and the 1886 O/S map (Figure 7 below) shows some buildings on the lot. A Mr C. Ridgeon has land immediately north of lot 14 – a forebear of the current Ridgeon's company? The advertisement of auction (Figure 17) shows that lot 14 was actually not disposed of until 1919.

Figure 6 shows what must have been a proposal by Mr Thoday to sub-divide the whole of the block of lots 64 and 65 (Figure 3) into forty-four lots – mostly residential, though some seemingly for commercial use. Why this was withdrawn is not clear, though it could have been due to subsequent plans for the cement works. However, it gives an indication of how the streets of Romsey Town were initially laid out.

Francis Thoday

A brief look at Mr Francis Thoday would be useful at this stage, as he evidently had a major influence on the development of parts of Romsey Town, amongst other matters. In brief (as written up in a newsletter by the Friends of Cherry Hinton Cemetery) he was born in Willingham in 1825, where, as recorded, many a Thoday lived. He married Caroline Searle in 1848 and they had three children that survived to adulthood: Herbert Searle, Sarah Elizabeth and Minnie Anne.

By 1860 he had moved to Cambridge and had gone into partnership with William Clayton to establish Thoday & Clayton Builders. The business flourished with contracts including alter-

ations and additions to Addenbrooke's Hospital and the laying out and building of Bateman and Norwich streets (Bateman Street was named after William Bateman, founder of Trinity Hall – which had owned the land prior to selling it to Robert Sayle who then leased it to Thoday & Clayton). In the 1860s Mr Thoday also acquired a brick-making concern in Cheddars Lane, which later became the Stourbridge Brick works.

The partnership with Mr Clayton was dissolved in 1869, for reasons unknown, yet he continued in business with his son, Herbert Searle Thoday. This was to become what has been quoted as 'one of the largest building and contracting firms in Cambridge'. Works included the Wesleyan Chapel on the corner of Hills Road and Norwich Street (now demolished), the second Eden Chapel on Burleigh Street and the 1878 part of the Zion Baptist Church on East Road. Mr Thoday, evidently a strong non-conformist, served on the board of the Cambridge Improvement Commissioners, and was a director of the tramway company.

In the 1880s the company built Thoday and Catharine streets (and had evidently purchased quite a lot of land thereabouts). He also became a director of the Romsey Town Cement and Lime Company. It is possible that he was also an instigator, for having a cement works and a brick-making company would have been a strategic move in the building business.

Nonetheless, when Herbert died in 1896 Francis Thoday had already dissolved the business and retired, eventually dying in 1908. The notice concerning the 1892 dissolution of the business, four years prior to Herbert's demise, is shown below on p. 13.

By the time of the 1886 Ordnance Survey map, things have changed. The Romsey Cottage and farm estate has been further broken up, and lots 64 and 65 have been separated from 66, upon which the Sanatorium has now been erected. Lots 64 and 65 are still mostly open land, though the vicinity is undergoing urbanisation. The map shows that the municipal boundary between Cambridge and Cherry Hinton runs north to south immediately to the west of the Sanatorium.

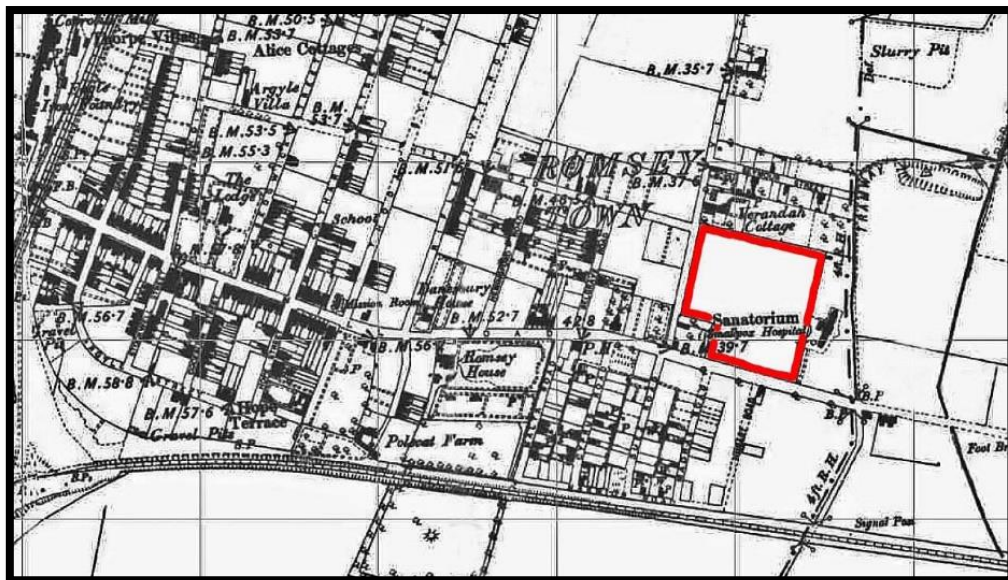


Figure 7 – O/S map of 1886 showing the site in relation to Romsey Town

The key street layout of Romsey Town is clearly shown, yet actual housing development is still confined to a few streets on the west side of Romsey Town. Infill is occurring here and there. Opposite lots 64 and 65 – by now probably identified as Nos 309–349 Mill Road – Malta, Cyprus, Suez and Madras streets are being built-up, though Hobart appears not yet to be made-up. To the east of the block, the original building of the Sanatorium (identified

as 'Smallpox Hospital') has now been built, and to the north is Verandah Cottage with its gardens, accessed by Vinery Road. Seymour Street has a few houses.

The old alignment of the Newmarket to Cambridge railway line is shown running east to west south of Mill Road (the alignment was changed in the late 1890s/early 1900s to its present route through Coldham's Common). Notable too is the coprolite excavation pit and associated tramway on land at the end of Seymour Street, which probably led to the finding of good marl and clay deposits soon to be exploited by the Romsey Town Cement and Lime Company.

Noticeable is the small block of houses and businesses in the south-west corner of lot 64/Nos 309–349: these are Nos 299 (Vinery House) to 307 Mill Road. This will be referred to throughout the report, and will be called 'the SW Block'. This block was excised from the larger lot 64/Nos 309–349 in the 1890s as can be seen in Figure 7 above. It can be seen that a series of different uses have occurred, though in 1886 only three buildings are shown.

Cambridgeshire Archives and the Cambridgeshire Collection

The Cambridgeshire Archives and the Cambridgeshire Collection contain several old documents and plans relating to developments on the site.

A copy of the *Cambridge Graphic* of 16 November 1901 contains an article on the Romsey Town Cement and Lime Co. Ltd. (see below), in which it is stated that the cement company was formed in 1887 under the name of Blewitt & Co, though actual construction came a few years later.

The site is shown in a plan of 1888 as:

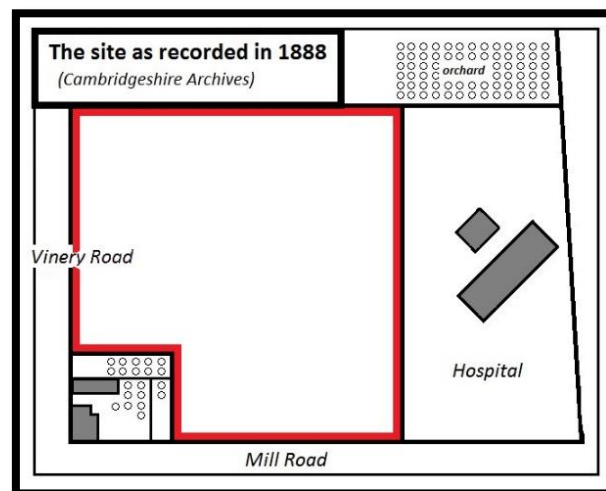


Figure 8 – Nos 309–313 and 315–349 Mill Road in 1888, as one vacant block (CA CB/4/9/30)

The plan shows the land as presumably identified for the development of the cement works. Note 'the SW Block', with Vinery (Corner) House and one other structure fronting on to Vinery Road – the same as shown on the 1886 O/S map. The orchard to the north must be part of the Verandah Cottage land.

b: 1889 to 1911

THE ROMSEY TOWN CEMENT AND LIME CO.

Concerning the Romsey Town Cement and Lime Co., Dylan Moore, recorder of cement works throughout the British Isles (website: Cement Plants and Kilns in Britain and Ireland), states that the land had been excavated for coprolites. This, though, is not shown on the 1886 or 1888 O/S maps. The 1903 O/S map, however, does show extensive digging, though this could have been extraction for the cement works. Moore writes that:

the plant started with one bottle kiln burning pre-dried unground 'cement rock', expanded to two in 1900. The output was 60 t/week in 1907 and finally perhaps 90 t/week. The plant also made hydraulic lime. There were eleven small kilns in 1904, of which perhaps five were in use for cement in 1907. The plant had no rail connection, and its minimal output was distributed by road within Cambridge.

The previously referred to *Cambridge Graphic* of November 1901 states that while the company was founded as Blewitt & Co.:

the name of the company was changed some three years later to that which it now (1901) bears – The Romsey Town Cement and Lime Co. Ltd. This was on the occasion of Mr Blewitt's retirement, when the company was carried on by Messrs. Francis Thoday and Son until 1895, and by their successors – Messrs. F. Thoday and Co. Ltd. – until January 1899, when the present company was formed with Mr Walter C Gibbs as Managing Director and Secretary.

The enterprise came to occupy the whole of the block – Nos 309 to 349 – with most of the land being worked, either for extraction or processing. By 1891, however, there had been further development in the area.

Records at the Cambridgeshire Archives show that on 3 June 1891 Thoday & Sons submitted an application in accordance with Bye-law 92 to the 'Borough of Cambridge, acting as the Urban Sanitary Authority', to erect additional buildings: a 'store shed, coal shed & mill'. All were to be one-storey, brick-built, slate-roofed, with arched and metal framed windows. The application was accompanied by this plan:

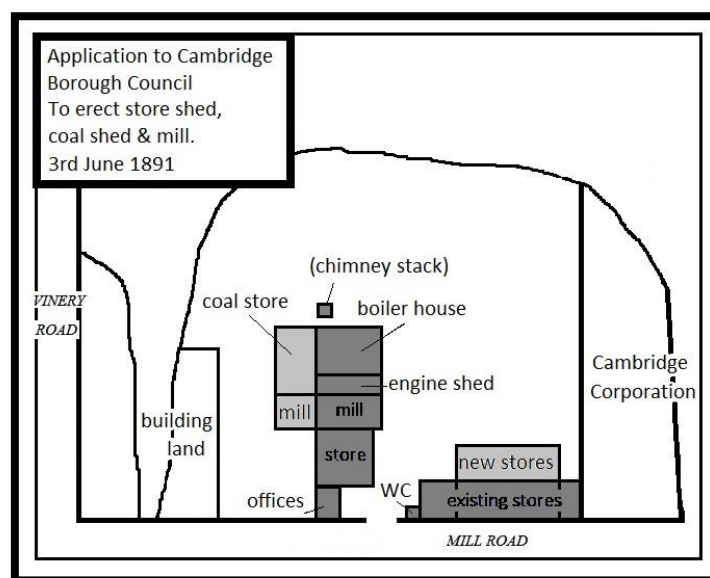


Figure 9 – Plan accompanying Romsey Town Cement & Lime Co. application of 3 June 1891 (CA: CB/2/SE/3/9/435)

Although not so shaded in the original, it is likely that the buildings on-site prior to the June 1891 application consisted of those in the darker shade – the works having already been in operation for some years.

Note the land for 'Cambridge Corporation' on the right – the Sanatorium – and the 'building land' on the left. While no actual buildings are shown, it is recorded in previous plans that this land ('the SW Block') was occupied as Nos 299–307. Most curious, though, is the odd shape seemingly indicating that some sort of gap/gully passed through the midst of this land – although shown on other plans, it is not recorded on any O/S maps, or noted in any recollections of the area.

In 1892 there was a change in ownership. A published notice (Cambridgeshire Archives) states that:

Notice is hereby given that the partnership heretofore subsisting between us, the undersigned, Francis Thoday and Herbert Searle Thoday, carrying on business as Builders and Contractors, and Brick and Tile and Cement Manufacturers at Cambridge, under the style or firm of Francis Thoday and Son, and the Romsey Town Cement Company, has been dissolved by mutual consent, as from the 31st day of December, 1892. All debts due to and owing by the said late firm will be received and paid by the said Francis Thoday, who will henceforth carry on the said businesses on his own behalf under the style or firm of Francis Thoday & Son as heretofore. Dated this 29th day of September 1893.

This seems to demonstrate that Herbert Searle Thoday stepped aside from the business, leaving Francis Thoday in sole ownership.

On 5 April, 1899, a letter (Cambridgeshire Archives) was sent by Walter C Gibbs, Managing Director and Secretary of the works, to the Borough of Cambridge informing it of the company's intention to build a new board room above the existing office. The accompanying sketch shows a rather elaborate elevation with a decorated oriel window. Mr Gibbs described the company as 'manufacturers of Portland cement and ground hydraulic lime. Contractors to the Great Eastern Railway Company and various county councils and local boards'. It seems from subsequent records that this was never built (a separate building was eventually erected on land facing Vinery Road). Nonetheless, the intention does indicate that the company must have been feeling quite confident at that time. Indeed, a newspaper notice held by the Archives reads:

The annual dinner of the staff of the G.E.R. District Goods Managers Office, so ably presided over by Mr. A. C. Hutcherson, was held at the Great Northern Hotel on Saturday evening. An excellent musical programme was contributed and a number of toasts submitted. Mr. W. C. Gibbs of the Oak Building Company and the Romsey Town Cement Company, in response to the toast of 'The Visitors', spoke of the consideration firms such as those with which he was connected received at the hands of the G.E.R. Company. He said that tenders for cement had been invited, but the railway rate was too high to permit of his firm tendering. A Belgian firm would have got the contract but for the fact that the G.E.R., when approached, lowered their rate, and they were able to secure the contract.

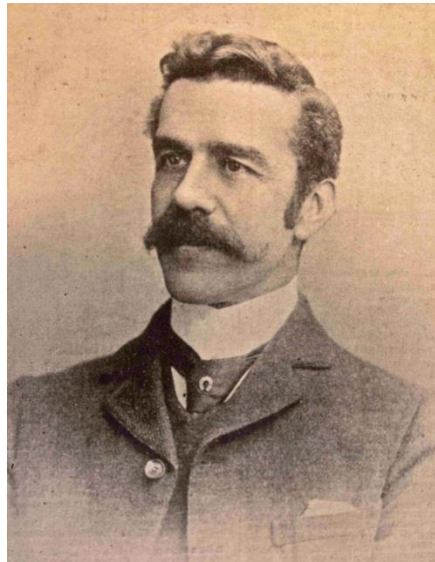
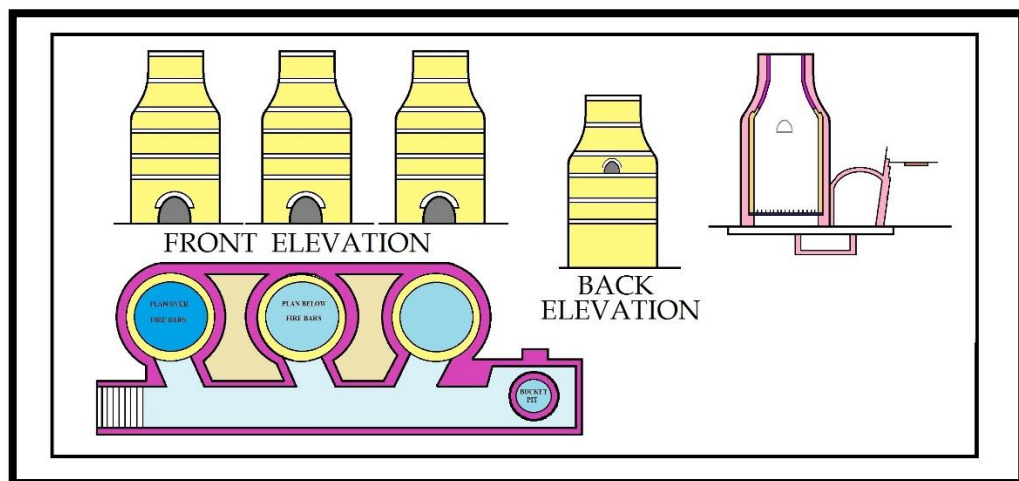
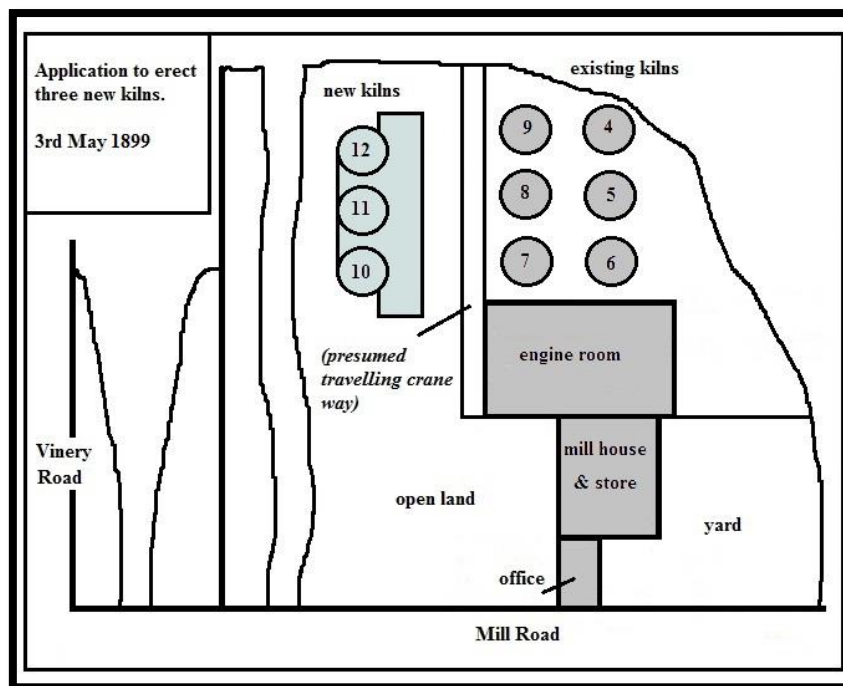


Figure 10 – Walter C Gibbs (CC: Cambridge Graphic)

On 3 May, 1899, a letter (CA: CB/2/SE/3/9/1532) was submitted to the borough by Walter Gibbs stating his intention to erect three new cement kilns on the site. The letter included detailed drawings and a layout plan.





Figures 11 & 12 – Detailed drawings accompanying the May 1899 application (CA: CB/2/SE/3/9/1532)

The three new kilns are Nos 10, 11 and 12, and the illustration shows them as being quite substantial. However the plan seems to differ from the layout as shown in the 1891 proposal; various buildings, such as the stores lying alongside Mill Road, are not there – perhaps it was not considered pertinent. The plan is similar, to a degree, to that shown in the O/S map of 1903. Nonetheless, the gap/gully shown in the plan of 1891 is still there, and it has been joined by a further, longer, one lying within the curtilage of the works.

The *Cambridge Graphic* article of Saturday 16 November 1901 (referred to above) gives a quite detailed account of the business:

The Romsey Town Cement and Lime Co. Ltd. Much has been written in the local press during the past few weeks on the subject of the cement industry in Cambridgeshire; whether this company or that is superior, and whether it is advisable for the public to invest in any undertakings of a similar nature in the county. But throughout this controversy we have heard no mention of the Romsey Town Company, Limited, which has preferred to await the termination of the war of words before inviting us to inspect its premises, and inform the public thereon. [...] And here it is interesting to note that the present Board of Directors consists of Mr Council, or T. Coulson (Director of the Sawston Parchment Company, Limited), chairman, together with Messrs. Walter C. Gibbs (Secretary and Director of the Oak Building Company, Limited), W. B. Redfern (Chairman and Director of many local companies, and Managing Director of the New Theatre Company, Limited), Arthur Rutter, and W.J. Sell, M.A., F.R.S. (Christ's College), who is also the consulting and analytical chemist of the Company.

The works, as will doubtless be within the knowledge of our readers, are situate on Mill Road, in the centre of a thickly-populated and growing neighbourhood, where there is a constant demand for the output of the Company. The property covers about five acres of ground, all of which contains a layer of cement marl of an average depth of 28 feet. Underlying this is an extensive bed of coprolites, below which is found blue clay of the usual quality used in manufacturing Cambridge bricks. But this latter deposit has up to the present only been worked for experimental purposes, and will doubtless prove to be, in the near future, a valuable asset in the holding of the company.

The machinery erected on the ground has been recently overhauled, and a new crusher and elevator of the substance is second to none in the Eastern Counties.

It were[sic] almost superfluous to dilate upon the numerous paths, stable floors, walls, domestic dwellings, and buildings that have been carried out with the Company's cement, no better testi-

mony of its excellence being obtainable than the knowledge that it has been supplied to Peterborough, Norwich, Yarmouth, Lowestoft, Clacton-on-Sea, Walton-on-the-Naze and numerous other places on the coast for public works. All who know the force of the waves on the Eastern coast during the winter season will realise that any material which can stand the strain they put upon it, is capable of being utilised in any manner with the certainty that it will not fail.

For three years the Company held the contract for supplying the Great Eastern Railway Company with Hydraulic Lime, this article being found on the estate of an exceptionally good quality, and one which is largely used for foundation work by reason of its hydraulic properties being so great.

The buildings on the property consist of offices, a testing room, stores capable of holding 2,000 tons, cart sheds, crusher, mill houses, boiler house, and workmen's mess house, together with a Board Room and cottage. There are entrances to the works from Priory Road[sic] and Mill Road, and the whole is enclosed with brick walls and close-boarded fences, all of which are in an excellent state of repair.

As will be seen from our illustration, a steam travelling crane is used for conveying the raw material from the pit to the kilns, and thence to the mill, and this effects a great saving of manual labour.

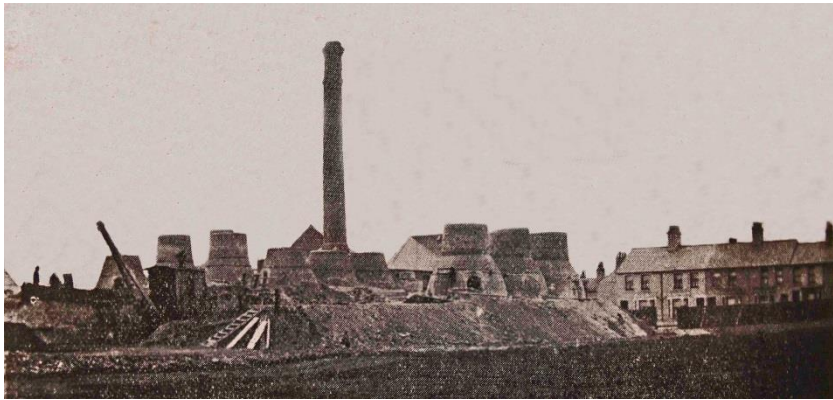
The present Managing Director has been connected with the business from its commencement in 1887, and has had a long experience in the manufacture of cement by the process employed by the Company. He is therefore eminently fitted for the position he holds, and his known business capacity, together with that of the other Directors, is sufficient to ensure the well-being of the Company, which, we are confident, has a long and prosperous future before it.

In conclusion, we could congratulate the Directors upon the success of their enterprise, which is a standing lesson for all who scoff at the idea that the cement industry may be carried off profitably in Cambridgeshire. [CC]

The article, ostensibly an advertisement for the company, makes plain that Mr Thoday is no longer involved. It seems that proprietorship may have passed to W Gibbs in 1899. The photographs accompanying the article are a bit fuzzy but interesting.



'machine and crushing houses'



'the kilns'



'the pits'

Figures 13, 14 & 15 – Romsey Town Cement & Lime Works
(CC: *Cambridge Graphic*, 16 Nov 1901)

The first two photographs clearly show the three new kilns of 1899, half buried in a bank; the first showing five or six workmen. The second and third photographs show parts of Mill Road in the distance. The last shows the depth of some of the excavation (a good ten or so metres/yards deep) – a top layer of approximately six feet seems to have been scraped back to reveal the lode-bearing seam. The offices are not shown at all.

Spalding's Directory

The 1891 directory records:

- Vinery Road
- Brown, William, cowkeeper, grocer, tea dealer and fruiterer
- Squires, William, upholsterer
- Lockwood, William, G.E. railway porter
- Building land
- House building
- The Original Cement and Lime Works, and Office – Blewitt, Thomas & Co, proprietors
- The Sanatorium (Hospital for Infectious Diseases).

This implies that 'the SW Block' – Nos 299 to 307 – has been considerably further developed since 1887, a mere four years earlier. William Brown is presumably operating a shop at 299 (the Corner House), though it might be doubtful that cows were actually kept there. Mr Squires has a small enterprise at 301, and Mr Lockwood lives at 303 and works for the Great

Eastern Railway Company. It is not noted whether they live singly or with families. Seemingly Nos 305 and 307 are unoccupied, though construction is underway on the latter.

The large block of Nos 309 to 349 is now a cement works, called 'the Original', operated by Thomas Blewitt & Co. Mr Blewitt had been in business with Francis and Herbert Thoday as Thomas Blewitt & Company, cement makers on Mill Road. However, the *London Gazette* of 6 October 1891 records that the partnership was dissolved in April of that year, leaving Francis and Herbert Thoday as proprietors.

The 1895 directory shows some changes.

- Vinery Road (pillar box)
- 299 —
- 301 Odell, Arthur, corn and seed dealer
- 305, 303 Topham, William, storekeeper
- Building land
- Romsey Town Cement and Lime Company – Thoday & Son, proprietors, Wright, David, manager
- The Sanatorium.

Either the Corner House (299) is now unoccupied, or there was no-one home. Mr Squires has been replaced with Mr Odell (O'Dell?), and Mr Topham has taken over from Mr Lockwood at 303 and is using the either vacant or newly built 305. No. 307 is still undeveloped.

The cement works has now taken on the name it will stay with, and the proprietorship is shown as having changed to Thoday & Son, with one D Wright as manager.

The directory for 1898 shows further changes:

- Vinery Road
- 299 Daisley, John, The Mill Road Dairy
- 301 Sparrow, James, painter
- 303 —
- 305 Turpin, John, bushel maker
- 307 —
- 309 Marriot, Alexander, bricklayer
- Building land
- Romsey Town Cement and Lime Company, Thoday and Co., Ltd., proprietors, Wright, David, manager
- The Sanatorium.

In 'the SW Block', the Corner House (299) now has John Daisley running the Mill Road Dairy; James Sparrow has replaced Arthur Odell at 301; 303 is vacant or unbuilt; John Turpin has replaced William Topham at 305; Alexander Marriot is occupying the new 309; and Thoday & Co Ltd are shown as still being the proprietors of the cement works. The Turpins – John at No. 305 is here referred to as a bushel maker (a bushel being a measure equivalent to eight gallons) – were to become a closely associated with the area for some time.

The directories for 1901 and 1911 generally consolidate the 1898 situation, though there appear to be some intriguing changes in the 'SW Block':

- 299 [the Corner House/Vinery House]: by 1907 John Daisley's business has changed from dairy to grocer and confectioner, then by 1910 Walter Child Jr occupies the address as a family butcher

- 301: by 1907 James Sparrow is listed as a general shopkeeper, replaced by 1910 by George Webb, also general shopkeeper
- 303: the directory has this first occupied by George Webb (who seemingly moved to 301), who by 1907 is replaced by James Arthur Fell, followed by 1911 by Albert King, carman
- 305: John Turpin, bushel maker, replaced by 1907 by L. Gawthrop, coal and coke dealer and light carter
- 307: Alexander Marriot, bricklayer, is apparently in occupation of both 307 and 309, though by 1907 this address has been taken over by John Turpin, still a bushel maker until 1910 when he becomes listed as a measure maker
- 309: at first recorded as occupied by Alexander Marriot, though by 1907 the address is not recorded at all, except possibly as 'building land', though no street number is given.

Ordnance Survey

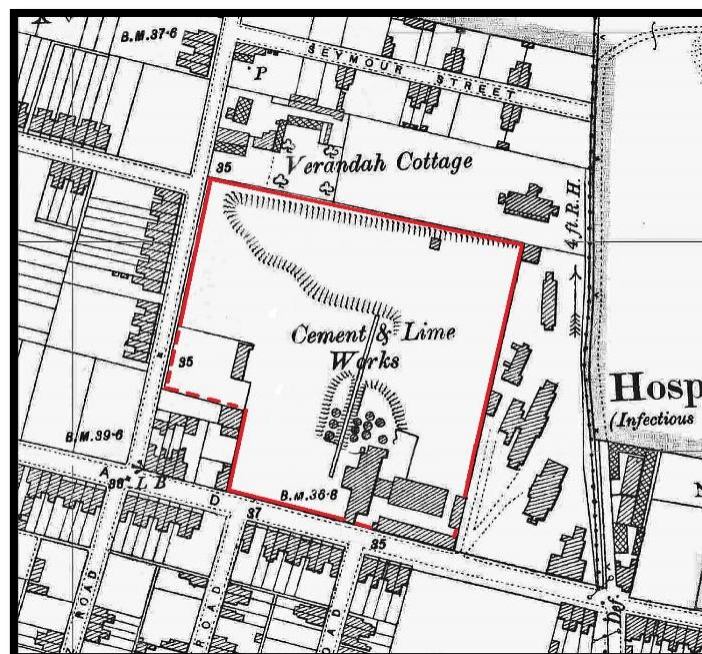


Figure 16 – O/S map 1903 (detail)

This 1903 map shows the cement and lime works very clearly. The main processing, storage and office buildings are there, as are eleven kilns and a tramway from the excavation in the north of the property. A new building has been erected within an enclosure facing Vinery Road. Additional development is shown in the 'SW block', with a number of outbuildings at the back. Moreover, there is now a building fronting on to Vinery Road, though set back some distance – this may represent the beginning of the severance of 309 to 349 land from Vinery Road.

The surrounding streets have become far more built up, as has the hospital, which appears to have expanded into what was the orchard belonging to Verandah Cottage.

c: 1911 to 1922

There is evidence that by 1910 the prosperity of the Romsey Town Cement and Lime Company was coming into doubt. Dylan Moore (website) states that ‘the plant had no rail connection, and its minimal output was distributed by road within Cambridge’. This would considerably hamper its competitive edge, particularly as the more modern and larger scale cement works (the Saxon Works and the Norman Works, both on Coldham’s Lane) were commencing production. Moreover, both these works had direct access to the railway and more extensive marl deposits for excavation.

Spalding’s Directory

Apart from the changes in the ‘SW Block’, as shown above, the only change recorded for the cement works that might have significance is the introduction in 1912 of Thomas Coulson as managing director and secretary, with David Wright still as manager. This continued until 1915, when William Seymour evidently replaced David Wright as manager. Then, in the 1916/17 directory, Seymour is still manager, while Thomas Coulson has become an alderman of the city. The directories continued to record the company as occupying the site until 1921, although by that time, as the business had been disposed of, no managers or directors were listed.

Cambridgeshire Archives

The ‘Lease Book’ (CB/2/CL/17/17/Page 485) of 1910–13 contains an entry in which the freehold land in Mill Road/Vinery Road ‘lately belonging to Francis Thoday & Co. Ltd’ has been sold by Francis Thoday & Co Ltd in August 1895 to Charles Finch Cunliffe Foster and Hugh Cunliffe Foster. Both these men were partners in Foster’s Bank, 1–7 Sydney Street, Cambridge; Charles Finch Cunliffe Foster was also Sheriff of Cambridgeshire & Huntingdonshire in 1900, the family home being “Pinehurst”, Grange Road, Cambridge.

A Mr Foster is said to have been a local banker, and if the same, also Sheriff of Cambridgeshire & Huntingdonshire in 1900, living at a house named Pinehurst, Cambridge. At that time the directors of the company were identified as Thomas Coulson (also secretary), W B Redfern and Arthur Rutter, represented in law by Samuel Ruben Ginn.

Yet the entry also records that the land to the North East, owned by Reuben Slingsby, was contracted to be sold to the company. What land this refers to has not been identified – no O/S map indicates any other parcel to the north-east than that occupied by the sanatorium/hospital. Nonetheless, it seems that Thoday was relinquishing ownership, possibly in stages: 1899, 1903 and 1907.

By 1919, after the First World War which, on one hand, might have brought about greater business, but on the other, might have detracted from it, the land and buildings were put up for auction. The Cambridgeshire Archives holds a document which states:

By Order of the Owner and Mortgagee.
Auctioneers: Arthur Rutter & Sons & Co.
At the Lion Hotel, Petty Curry on 24th May 1919
The Romsey Town Cement and Lime Works.
Particulars of the ‘valuable freehold mercantile premises’
Approx. 3 acres in total, whether as a whole or in two lots.
‘There is a valuable and deep bed, about twenty feet, of good quality chalk marl which has been analysed

on several occasions and has been reported as being some of the best marl in the neighbourhood' – below is a 'deep bed of clay for the manufacture of bricks'.

Lot One (two acres, 2 roods, four poles, with 344ft Mill Road frontage)

- Brick-built office
- Two-storey brick and corrugated iron warehouse (29 by 26)
- Brick-built store room, formerly engine room.
- Brick-built engine room with corrugated iron roof with a 52 BHP gas engine.
- Brick-built boiler house with two boilers.
- Warehouse (3200sf) connected to the main building.
- Water closet and stable.
- Two more warehouses.
- Timber-built lean-to shed with pantile roof.
- Ten brick-built kilns, a 'lofty brick-built chimney stack'.
- Travelling crane and marl pit.

Lot Two (two roods, nine poles)

- Garden or building land (fronting Vinery Road)
- Brick-built 'board room'.

On the whole of the property = 600,000 cubic feet of marl capable of producing 20,000 tons of cement.

The reference to a large quantity of marl capable of producing cement might indicate that both the owners and the auctioneers thought that cement making could continue on the site, though in fact this was not to be.

Superimposed on the 1903 O/S map, the two lots to be auctioned can be seen as:

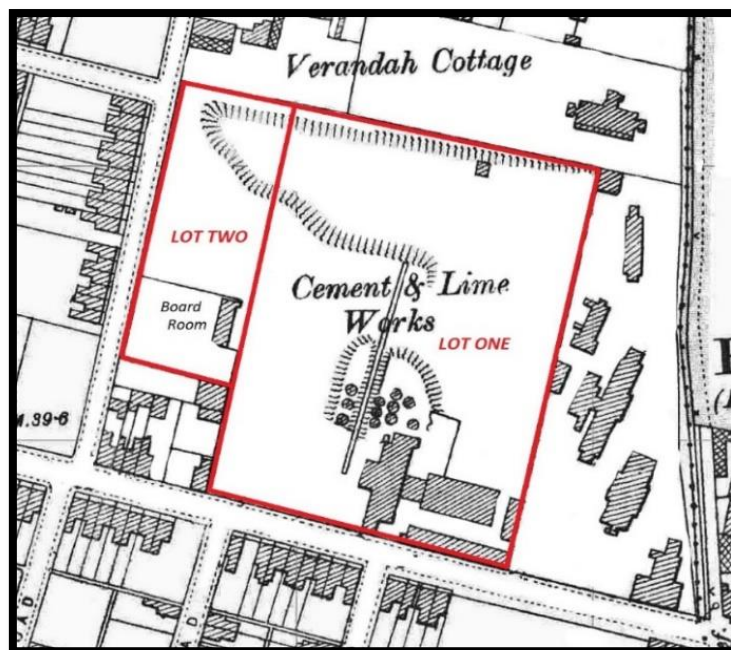


Figure 17 – The two lots auctioned in 1919 (CA: 1026/SP218 & 1903 O/S map, detail)

d: 1922 to 1940

In spite of the considerable social and economic turbulence caused by the First World War, everyday life in the built-up areas of the city seemed to change little – greater changes were to be found in 'greenfield' sites further out, where streets of new housing were being built, with new roads (Perne Road, etc.) to connect them.

It is not clear how the auction of the land went. As Spalding's seems to confirm, there was no obvious change in land use from the auction of 1919 to 1921 – it was still recorded as the cement works, albeit assumedly inactive. Yet Lot One must have become divided into two lots, as the Spalding's directory for 1922 records the eastern half the land – 315 to 349 Mill Road – as occupied by the Cam Iron Foundry run by A. Macintosh & Sons Ltd. 309 to 313 Mill Road is recorded as 'building land', indicating no distinct land use. Lot Two was probably also have been disposed of as an individual unit.

However, by 1925 O/S maps indicate that there had been a substantial change in land ownership. Lot One has indeed been divided into two lots – the Cam Iron Foundry and the building land – and a stretch of land running along the north side (land mostly characterised by excavation works) has been excised, most probably for the hospital.

THE CAM IRON FOUNDRY

According to Alger, Brigham, Hockley and Wilkinson (1996), the Cam Iron Foundry was one of about eleven iron founding businesses in and around Cambridge in the 19th and early 20th century. The Macintoshes had their original foundry in Thompson's Lane and their shop and main office on Market Hill. In 1923, however, the Thompson's Lane foundry ceased production and 'the business was moved to a site on the old Romsey Town cement works in Mill Road, opposite Hobart Road [...]'. One Harry Fry, previously at Thompson's Lane, was the initial foundry manager.

Alger *et al* state that iron founding at Mill Road 'ceased in 1934', after which 'the business concentrated on supplying agricultural machinery bought from other manufacturers'. Spalding's continued to record the address as a foundry until the 1940s, after which it was described as an agricultural engineering concern. The site was recorded as a builders' supply merchant in 1963, after which Frank Holland took over the site in 1965 for his motor business.

Spalding's Directory

The 1922/23 directory listed the occupants from Vinery Road to the hospital thus:

- 299 [the Corner House/Vinery House]: Walter John Childs [simply 'Child' in the earlier directory], family butcher
- 301: Miss M. M. Scard, general shopkeeper
- 303: F. C. Balls, carriage painter
- 305: Ambrose Smith
- 307: Mrs M. E. Turpin [and] John Turpin, timber merchant
- [309 –313]: Building land
- [315–349]: Macintosh A & Sons Ltd., Cam Iron Foundry
- The Infectious Diseases Hospital.

Much has changed since 1911. At 299, the family butcher business has changed from John Daisley to Walter John Childs ('Walter Childs Jr' in 1910); 301 is still a general shop, though under Miss Scard rather than G Webb; at 303 Albert King has been replaced by F C Balls, though both seem to have been in the railway carriage maintenance field; 305 has changed hands several times since L Gawthrop in 1907 and is now in the hands of Ambrose Smith (haulage contractors); and at 307 the Turpins are now listed 'timber merchants' rather than as previously 'measure makers'. Nos 309 to 313 are still unoccupied, and at 315 to 349 A. Macintosh & Sons Ltd are now listed as proprietors of the Cam Iron Foundry.

This arrangement seems to have continued through 1923/24, though by the 1924/25 directory things had changed again. Walter Childs was still at No. 299; at 301 Mrs S Ambrose had taken over from Miss Scard as shopkeeper (actual ownership of the shop may have stayed the same, with only management changing); F C Balls remains at 303; at 305 the Ambroses (Smith or otherwise) are now identified as a business; the Turpins have moved from 307, where one E White is now in occupation; and the 'building land' of 309 to 313 is now occupied. Miss F Reed is running a general stores at 311, and John Turpin is a timber merchant at 313.

Matters remain much the same in the 1925/26 directory, though Miss Reed has left No. 309 which has been taken over by P Turpin as a fishmonger, and No. 311 is now vacant.

Throughout the late 1920s, the 1930s and up to 1940 – a period of general economic contraction – there were only a few changes:

- 299 [the Corner House/Vinery House]: remained as Childs' family butcher, adding '& Son' for 1933/34, though not thereafter
- 301: Mrs Smith remained as general shop-keeper, though one B C Smith was listed as an insurance agent from 1929 to 1933, and not thereafter
- 303: F C Balls stayed throughout the period and until around 1951/52
- 305: S Chapman took over as a coal merchant in 1929, and continued there into the 1960s
- 307: in 1932 E White gave way to A Watkins, a cement worker, who remained there
- 309: P Turpin continued as a fishmonger until around 1936. The address was recorded as vacant in 1937/38, after which A T Page took over as 'fish frier' in 1938/39, replaced by E Hammond, also a 'fish frier', in 1939/40
- 311: in 1926 John Jacobs is recorded as having a general store here. By 1931 Charles Prime was there as a boot-mender. He gave way in 1933 to a Miss Smith who operated a general store, only to be replaced as store owner/manager by 1934 by Ed Hancock. By 1937 the address was vacant, then occupied by the Blue Wing Lending Library in 1938/39. By 1939/40 it was in the hands of B Turpin, ironmonger
- [315–349]: this continued to be recorded as Macintosh A & Sons Ltd., Cam Iron Foundry
- The Infectious Diseases Hospital.

Concerning No. 311 in the years 1938/39, no further information has been discovered on the Blue Wing Lending Library. Was it a one-off, possibly charitable initiative?

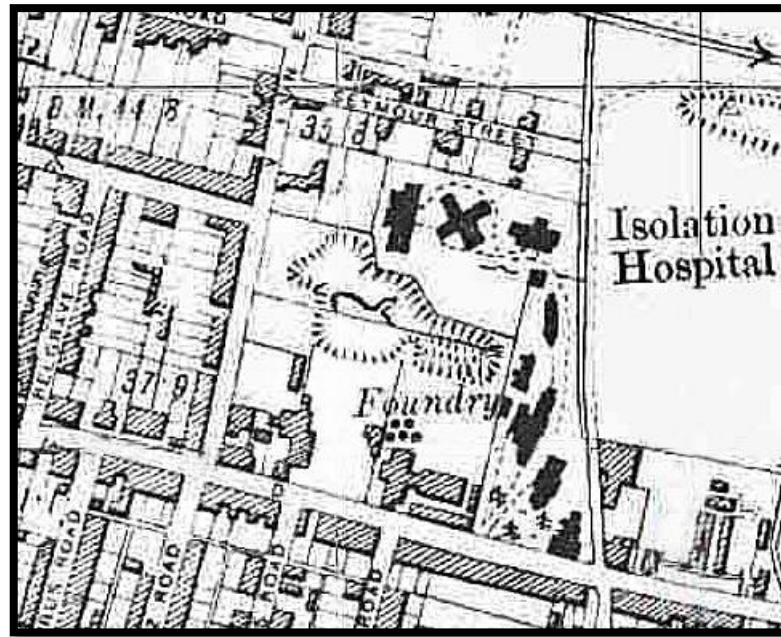
Ordnance Survey

Figure 18 – O/S map 1925 (detail)

In the 1925 map, the Cam Iron Foundry can be seen occupying the eastern part (Nos 315–349) of the land previously occupied by the Romsey Town Cement and Lime Works. Some of the original kilns appear to still be in place, and in fact it appears that Mackintosh simply moved into the old cement works buildings – they are more or less identical to those shown in the 1903 O/S map.

It can be assumed that the western part of the land (Nos 309 to 313) was still generally undeveloped land, with P. Turpin as fishmonger at No. 309, and, possibly, a general store at No. 311. The Turpin timber yard may still have been at No. 307, though it appears that there was some vagueness at this point as to longer-term occupation. Nos 299 to 307 were occupied by a variety of trades people.

The old cement works board room still seems to be in place facing on to Vinery Road, north of which is a parcel of land of undecided use. Further north is an odd-shaped parcel which has been largely excavated for its marl and clay. This has been divided off from the original cement works land, with the hospital taking what appears to be the un-excavated part. By now the hospital itself appears to be fully developed and Norman Terrace has been built – on Mill Road, opposite the hospital.

The 1938 O/S map shows the same information, though an indicative block of housing (outlined – not actual) has been placed fronting Vinery Road in front of the old cement works board room.

e: 1948 to 1964

Superficially, Cambridge was little affected by the Second World War, yet it was bombed, with some bombs falling on Mill Road in January 1941 in the vicinity of the railway bridge, where two people were killed and several injured. Materially, Mill Road otherwise seems to have been generally unaffected.

Post-war, in the latter 1940s, little changed in the fabric of the road. The new Labour government brought in a wide array of social and economic innovation, though this didn't seem to result in any notable changes in its character.

Kelly's Directory

One change, however, was the replacement of Spalding's directories by Kelly's, and Kelly's directory for 1948 shows:

- 299: this is now recorded as being occupied by Mrs. M Barker
- 301: recorded as the premises of confectioners Adams, Adams and Dellar
- 303: Fredrick Balls is still there, as is Stephen Chapman, coal merchant, at 305
- 307: George W Dye has taken over as a motor engineer
- 309 & 311: all mentions of fish have ceased, and John L Turpin has taken over the entire parcel of land as 'ironmonger'
- 313: this is also under John I[sic] Turpin, but as 'timber merchant'
- [315–349]: Macintosh A & Sons Ltd., agricultural engineers
- Isolation Hospital.

By way of indicating the rental value of the properties in the mid-1940s, a notice of auction (515/SP1772) of Nos 301, 303 and 305 Mill Road was advertised in February 1943:

- 301: described as 'a freehold brick and slated shop and dwelling house. Three bedrooms & electric light to the ground floor. Shop front, back sitting room, scullery, pantry, lean-to WC. Let to Mr B C Smith on an annual basis at £26 pa'.
- 303: 'a freehold dwelling house adjoining 301. Three bedrooms each with fitted stove. Entrance passage, front and back sitting rooms, scullery, lean-to WC. Let to Mr Balls on a weekly tenancy at £19 pa'.
- 305: 'adjoining house of similar construction and accommodation. Large yard in rear with double entrance gates. Let to Mr S Chapman on a weekly tenancy at £41.12.0 pa'.

The Childs have ceased trading as butchers, and the address has been taken over by Mrs Barker, though it is not known what her trade was. Mrs Smith has left No. 301 which is now a confectioner's shop, possibly a significant change. At 307 George Dye has established himself as a motor engineer, a business that was to mutate over the next few decades (with some evidence still being in place in late 2017). Turpin has expanded the business to, essentially, take in the whole of 309 to 313 as a combination of ironmonger and timber merchant.

A. Macintosh & Sons Ltd remains at 315 to 349, though now listed as 'agricultural engineers', reflecting the change in the company – ceasing founding in 1934 and concentrating on supplying agricultural machinery – as described by Alger *et al*, above.

The directories up to 1964 reveal gradual yet significant development. Mrs Barker stayed at No. 299, though by 1964 Patrick Barker had taken over. At 301 by 1951 a Mrs Chivers was representing Chivers & Caple, grocers (no firm connection has been established with the better-known Chivers fruit company) and by 1955 the address along with No. 303 had been taken over by Gordon Barrett, first as 'shopkeeper' and by 1964 'newsagent'. By 1953 Fredrick Balls at 303 had been replaced by Clifford Capel (possibly, allowing for misspelling, connected to Chivers & Caple). Stephen Chapman stayed put at 305 throughout, as did George Dye at 307, though by 1964 he was listed as 'cycle agent'.

John I[sic] Turpin remained as ironmonger at 309/311 and as timber merchant at 313, although from 1953 the business is recorded as coming under the Turpin Brothers. By 1951 a Mr Marsh was recorded at No. 313, and there he remained until 1964; any connection he had with the Turpin business is unknown. A Macintosh & Sons remained in place, though by 1964 it was recorded as 'Cambridge Building Supplies, builders' merchant', signifying a considerable change in fortune. The previously known Isolation Hospital is now called the Brookfields Hospital.

Ordnance Survey

The 1950 O/S map shows little change from previously apart from the three semi-detached houses along Vinery Road (still there in 2017), where the old Romsey Town Cement & Lime Co. board rooms had been and by 1950 had gone. A new building appears to have been erected behind the old store shed of the Macintosh premises. Otherwise, rows of new dwellings are shown fronting on to Brook's Road, and around Montreal Square.

TURPIN'S TIMBER YARD

With the winding down of Macintoshes' activities, from iron founding to selling products that had been made elsewhere, the major business in this part of Mill Road was Turpin's timber yard and its related enterprises. As can be seen in the Spalding's and Kelly's directories, John Turpin is first mentioned in 1898, as a bushel maker at No. 305.

There were subsequent permutations: a 1910 move to 307 as 'measure maker'; the 1919 application to the borough council for 'temporary timber-framed shed covering over saw benches to protect machinery & workers from the weather', quoted as necessitated by 'heavy demand through war work'; the 1922/23 recording of Mrs M E Turpin and the trade of 'timber merchant'; the 1924/25 move from 307 to 313, with 309 being occupied by P Turpin as 'fishmonger' (continued to 1936); the 1939/40 occupation of 311 by B Turpin as 'ironmonger'; the 1948 occupation of 309 and 311 as ironmongers (with no more mention of fish) and 313 used by John Turpin as 'timber merchant'. It can be assumed that by 1948 the whole of 309 to 313 was occupied by the Turpin Brothers as timber merchants, though with side-line activities.

Sarah Payne, in her book *Down Your Street, Cambridge Past and Present*, II *East Cambridge* (1984) is informative:

Turpin's timber yard was a well-known spot in Mill Road for many years. The street directory for 1913 lists John Turpin a 'measure maker' at 307 Mill Road, but by 1925 he is listed as a timber merchant at 313 Mill Road. What happened was that when their bushel and peck measures were no longer required, John Turpin and his sons turned to cricket bats. Later, they began to supply woods to local builders and one of them, John L. Turpin, set up in the timber trade. The local boys used to go to Turpin's timber yard to collect sawdust for their pet rabbits. Almost next to Turpin's yard, A. Macintosh and Sons ran the Cambridge Iron Foundry for many years. They sold the site to Frank Holland, the proprietor of Dutch's Corner Garage in the early 1960s.



Figure 19 – Turpin’s premises, presumably in 1964 (CC: B.MILL.K64 1660)

In Figure 19, above, the centre building is the second-hand shop run by J I[sic] Turpin, though attached to its front is a notice of auction for the site.

Cambridgeshire Archives

A record held in the Archives shows that there was an auction of the Turpins’ land at the end of November 1960.

Auction, Wednesday 30th November, **1960** (Lion Hotel)
 ‘Valuable freehold industrial site’ – 309 & 311 Mill Road.
 Mill Road frontage of 101 ft, depth of approximately 320 ft.
 Scheduled in the approved Town Map for Industrial Purposes.
 Vacant possession.

- Two lock-up shops, brick-built with corrugated iron roofs.
- Saw mill, with brick piers & corrugated iron roof
- Machinery as fixed is excluded.

‘Part of the frontage is at present screened by advertising hoardings erected by Messrs Mills & Rockleys Ltd, who hold on a tenancy for 5 years from 3/8/54 at £13.6.8 pa.’
For Wilfred James Turpin, Richard Turpin & Herbert Spencer Turpin.

Auction brochure: Douglas L. January & Partners

The accompanying map shows:

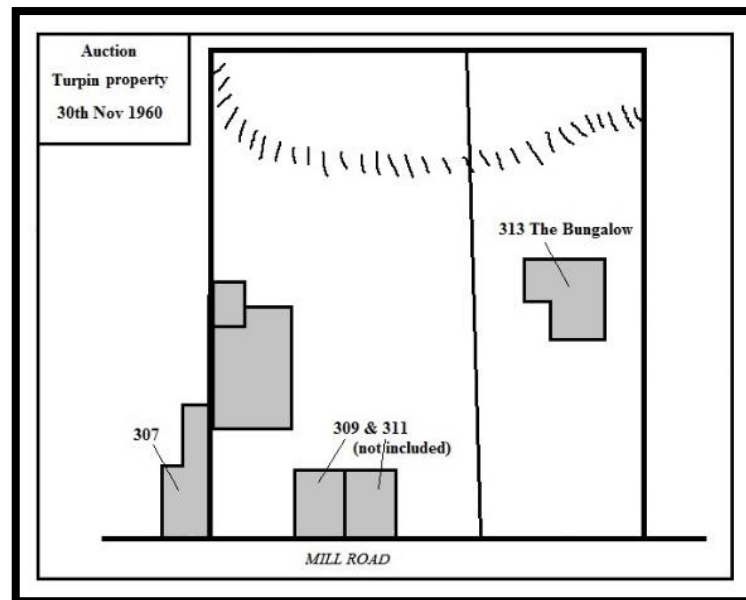


Figure 20 – Map accompanying auction Nov 1960 (CA)

While this implies that the company was being liquidated, the outcome of the auction is unknown. It may be assumed that the business ceased operations and the land became subject to negotiation or was bought as a holding pending subsequent sale. Kelly's continued to record the address as 'Turpin Bros. timber merchants' until 1964.

Noticeable on the map is the exception of Nos 309 and 311 from any sale, either of which could be the second-hand shop shown in Figure 19 above. It appears that, at least, Mr Marsh's property was exempted. Also, a 'bungalow' is shown in what appears to be a separate parcel identified as 313; this is not recorded in either Kelly's Directories or on any O/S map.

f: 1965 to the 1990s

1965 appears to be the year during which the area experienced substantial change. While several occupants of the 'south west' block are still in place, both Turpin's and Macintoshes' businesses have been replaced by new enterprises.

Kelly's Directory

In the directory of 1965/66 we can see some major change:

- 299: Patrick Barker remains in place
- 301/303: Gordon Barratt remains as newsagent
- 305: no occupant is recorded (and this continues to the 1970s)
- 307: G. W. Dye & Son, cycle agents
- 309/313: this now has a bowling alley
- 315 [to 349]: this is now recorded as Dutch's Corner Ltd – a motor workshop
- Brookfields Hospital.

Ordnance Survey

Figure 21 – O/S map 1967

In this map it can be seen that there has been considerable change on the two properties. At Nos 309–313 Turpin's buildings have been replaced by the Magnet bowling alley, and at Nos 315–349 the new Holland Motor garage has replaced Macintosh's old foundry buildings. Furthermore, the excavated ground lying behind the two properties, clearly visible in the O/S 1925 map (Figure 18) appears to be undergoing restoration with some tree planting, and its extent to Vinery Road has been surveyed into another parcel. Both these parcels were later incorporated into the hospital's estate.

The hospital itself appears much the same as it did in the 1925 and the 1950 O/S maps, though Seymour Road has now been extended to Brookfields, enabling in-filling with residential blocks all along its new length.

The 'SW' block has been little altered. The row of semi-detached houses along Vinery Road – Nos 6 to 16 – is now in place.

THE MAGNET BOWLING ALLEY

In early 1963 Contemporary Homes, of Wembley, submitted a brief initial proposal to the City Council for a 24-lane bowling alley with office, snack bar and kitchen. By July that proposal had been magnified to include a lounge, changing rooms, control office and administration offices, and the point of contact had changed to Contemporary Homes c/o M. Vickers of King's Parade, Cambridge – the architect of the building. Additional plans were requested, and stipulations inserted that 'the whole of the premises shall be closed to the public between the hours of midnight and 8am each day', and that there would be parking for 75 cars, to 'safeguard the amenities of existing residential properties in the vicinity' and

facilitate the free flow of traffic. By April 1964, Bedford (Ford End) Property Co. Ltd – still represented by M. Vickers – was given approval for the development.

It is interesting to note that in late 1964 an application was submitted to the City Council for an 'entertainment area including Bowling Centre, dance area or ice rink, public house with flat over, service station with office. 150 car parking'. This was for the whole of 309–349 Mill Road – both sites. It was, however, withdrawn, and it is not clear who was behind the proposal.

It appears that both Contemporary Homes and Bedford (Ford End) Property Co. Ltd were instruments of Magnet Bowling, as in 1963 the *Cambridge Evening News* reported that 'Mr Pat Cordier, the promotion manager of Magnet Bowling, told members of the Cambridge Tenpin Bowling League [...] that the new bowling centre in Cambridge would definitely open in the new year'. Mr Cordier assured the league that the new facility would mean they wouldn't have to travel to Stevenage any more to use league-standard amenities, as they had previously had to do.

In the early 1960s bowling alleys were all the rage. The website Talkbowling (<http://www.talkbowling.co.uk/>) describes it quite succinctly:

It was not until 1960 that ten-pin bowling, in its modern guise, was introduced to the UK. A far cry from the medieval games of skittles and kegel which had once been so popular, the game was now equipped with all the latest technology, including automatic pinsetters and tracks to return balls to the approach once they had been rolled. The first alleys to open were Stamford Hill and Golders Green, both in London. There was immediately a boom in interest and in no time, over 160 alleys had opened around the country.

A description by the *Cambridge Evening News* of March 1965 stated that the building was costing £130,000, and that 'one of the most delicate operations has been the laying of the high-quality maple wood floor'. This floor, and the complex mechanism for re-setting the ten pins, was installed by A.M.F. Ltd.

The design of the building was, it was stated, intended to reflect a 'chunky', masculine appearance, reflecting the active life within'. The free-standing covered entrance was supposed to allow clientele to arrive protected from inclement weather.

Along with the actual bowling alleys, there were also 'shop facilities, lockers and changing rooms with usual offices, a snack bar, a large club-room off which there is a league room, and various service rooms'. The principal contractors were J M Hill and Sons of Ampthill.

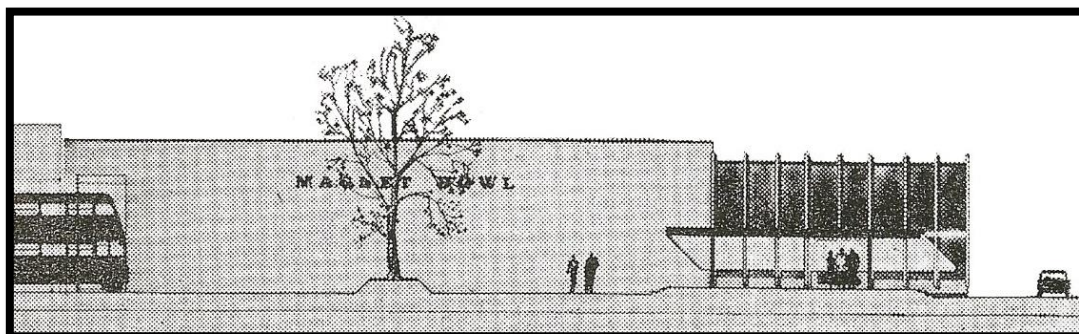


Figure 22 – Elevation of bowling alley from Mill Road (*CEN* March 1965)

The architecture of the bowling alley was considered worthy of being included in *Cambridge New Architecture* (see Booth & Taylor (1970)). The description read as follows:

This 24-lane tenpin bowling centre lies at the other end of Mill Road from Parker's Piece. The plot of previously derelict land has a 140ft frontage – unusually wide for an otherwise built-up street, but exceptionally narrow for a bowling centre, which has to conform to the precise measurements of standardized equipment. The lanes, each 60ft by 3ft 6in, are placed parallel with the road, in a single space laid out in a series of strips: the pin decks with a maintenance passageway behind, the lanes themselves, the players' approach area (16ft wide), spectators' and players' seating (14ft), the foyer (14ft) and the snack bar, changing rooms and lavatories. Next to the snack bar is the central control desk. Apart from two rows of columns defining the snack bar and service rooms, the structure is a single span of castellated steelwork supported on loadbearing brick walls, with brown facings. The main space is artificially lit and ventilated. At the rear of the building is another row of service and plant rooms in brick, including the club bar and league room. The street façade has a broad windowless wall (with illuminated lettering) set back behind a lawn with a transplanted tree; the porch, which has a projecting timber canopy on steel columns, has thick wooden mullions and a copper fascia, as have the large windows to the two bars. The rear doors lead out to parking space for 74 cars. Internal finishes are largely in plastic and asbestos tiling, with myriad spotlights in the foyer contrasting with the uniform brightness of the playing area.

The comment on the architecture:

Bowling is liturgically one of the most dogmatic of modern religions: so fantastically expensive is the equipment – about £3,000 a lane, making approximately half the cost of each building – that the game's rapid promotion in Britain (over 200 centres opened since January 1960) can be traced almost entirely to the slump which menaced the principal equipment manufacturers, A.M.F. Inc., after they had flooded the American market. According to A.M.F. tenpin is 'a scientifically captivating sport played regularly and seriously in an atmosphere of friendly competition' – i.e. there is virtually nothing to it, except the magic of its mechanical aids and the attraction of its club atmosphere. Undoubtedly the reaction of most bourgeois style-fanciers to the Magnet Bowl will be gratitude that it is all in such good taste, particularly in Mill Road of the plebs. G. M. Vickers has indeed done a capable layout on a difficult site even though the snack bar is cramped; and he has used the approved emblems of enlightenment – sensitive expanses of brickwork, dignified timber mullions, a Jacobsen-style porte-cochere, a transplanted tree with tiles and pebbles at its base. The lettering is civilized and only the glittering copper fascias are a little brash at present. All this is thoroughly decent and bravely done. But it is not really relevant. If the inside is visually stunning – one of the finest modern interiors in Cambridge – it is just because it is 'scientifically captivating' – the only piece of architecture locally that is, apart from the Radio Telescope. The equipment, which the architect had to accept willy-nilly, is not, thank heavens, in good taste. It whizzes and pops and shimmers: the lanes in polished hardwood, the seats in bright red plastic, the lit-up score panels, the Freudian pins and balls. Fortunately, Vickers has entered into the act himself with his swooping folds of suspended ceiling dropping downwards across the lanes and exaggerating the curiously infinite distance to the pins.

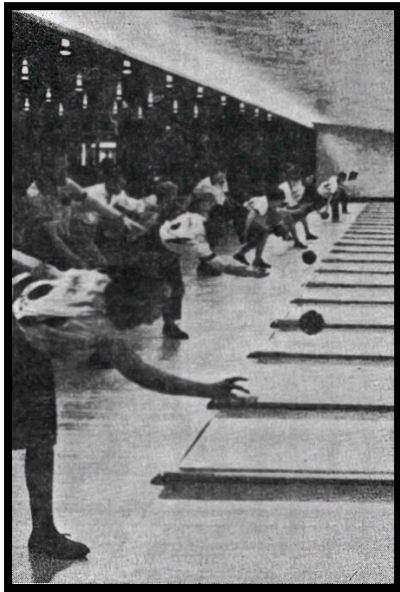
The Mill Road 'plebs' might have been impressed by the alley's launch when it was opened in April 1965 with a bit of a splash by the Mayor of Cambridge, Ald. P J Warren. As the *Cambridge Evening News* reported it:

The rumble of a golden ball, bowled by former England Rugby captain Dickie Jeeps, will today christen Cambridge's £150,000 tenpin bowling centre in Mill Road. It will open to the public at 10.00am tomorrow, to midnight, seven days a week.

A spokesman for Magnet Bowling, the proprietors, says: 'we have been inundated with requests from factories, social clubs and individuals for advice on how to form league bowling teams and in fact 80 teams are ready to compete when the centre opens.'

Bowling has a great social side, to be catered for in the well-appointed clubroom adjoining the bowling lanes. Here, the carpeting has been planned to allow the unclipping of the middle piece when a dance floor is needed on special club occasions.

Mothers with young children to mind will have no problems when they wish to bowl. There is a special nursery at the centre where mothers bowling in daytime leagues may leave their youngsters in perfect safety.'



Figures 23 & 24 – Bowlers in action at Magnet Alley, and Mill Road façade (with 'to let' sign, indicating the alley's demise) (*CEN* 1966 and Feb 1970)

It appears, however, that it was only a matter of some six weeks before problems began to arise. A report by the *Cambridge Evening News* of 29 April 1965 states:

Some readers of this newspaper have complained this week that they have been turned away from the new bowling centre in Cambridge because they were dressed in a fashion which the management have declared taboo.

They thought leather jackets and jeans appropriate wear for the occasion, but the management associate such clothes with 'ton-up' boys and trouble.

If the Cambridge bowling centre is to be both popular and respectable, precautions must be taken. As the management say, the trouble comes not from the bowlers, but from a section of the spectators, some of whom attend only to gawk.

There is doubtless a percentage who see the new centre as an exciting alternative to the coffee bars which, themselves harmless and pleasurable, have occasionally been turned into disturbing dives when frequented by rowdies.

No-one would dispute that a lounge suit or skirt are hardly the best wear for bowling. Some more sporting apparel is indicated, though we would have thought that, while jeans would be convenient, a leather jacket would soon become inconveniently hot.

Recent comment from locals who have lived in the area since at least the late 1960s (Sam Lagdon, Andy Kurdynowski) suggest that the management's selectivity implied in the article above contributed to the venue's eventual closure. Locals were put off, and felt themselves excluded by the presence of the leagues, which tended to dominate. It could be said that the alley became a victim of its own success – its high standards went beyond its market.

In 1968 the bowling alley closed (though some sources have it closing on 16 February 1970), and by 1971 Robert Sayle (now John Lewis) Department Store was searching for storage space.

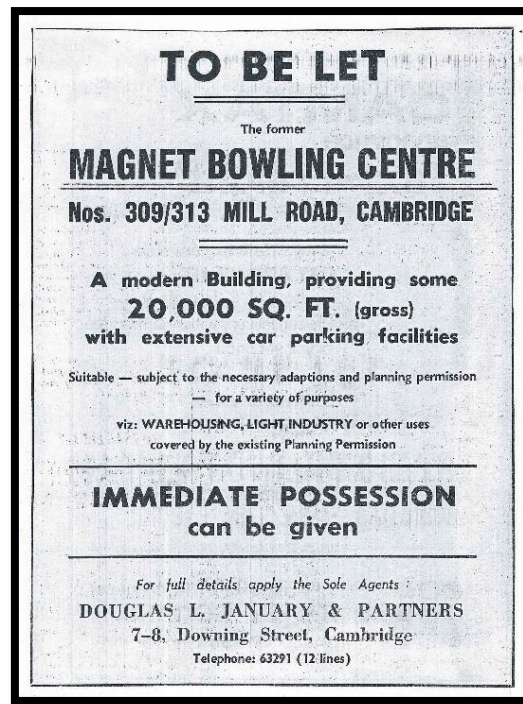


Figure 25 – Magnet bowling alley advertisement (CA)

It was during this period that there was new activity on the old Macintosh site.

FRANK HOLLAND (PRIORY) MOTORS

Down Your Street, Cambridge Past and Present, mentioned above, states that 'Almost next to Turpin's yard, A. Macintosh and Sons ran the Cambridge Iron Foundry for many years. They sold the site to Frank Holland, the proprietor of Dutch's Corner Garage in the early 1960s'.

In March 1965, F E Holland (represented by D C Denton Smith & Partners of 40 Regent Street) was granted approval by the Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely planning authority to develop land at 315–349 Mill Road for 'the erection of a petrol filling station, toilets, canteen and alterations to the existing car store and office'. This clearly implies that Mr Holland had already been using the site, if only for storage. The permission did not allow for the sale of vehicles. It appears that the company was also generally known as Dutch's Corner Ltd.

Mr Holland had his business main located at 213 Mill Road: Dutch's Corner – hence the name. No. 213, in the 19th century a family house with later an attached yeast-supply business, was sold in 1975 to Mr Holland for his motor repair and fuelling business. It has not yet been ascertained whether Mr Holland's first interest was at 315–349 Mill Road or at 213. Nonetheless, the business at Nos 315–349 Mill Road did well and became well-established.

Companies' House states that Frank Holland Motors was established in 1978 – this is taken as the registration of a new name for the business, which had existed since at least 1975. Company's House also stated that the business was to be struck off in December 1994, though little is clear: in 1982 Frank Holland Motors (represented by the R H Partnership of Sandy Lane) was granted permission to erect a car wash and workshop; in 1991 the business (with no representation) was given permission to install three 8,000-gallon underground petrol storage tanks to replace the existing ones; in 1995 there was an application for the extension of the existing showroom, and similar in 1996; later in 1996 I D Services (of

Gamlingay) received approval for 'single storey front extensions to provide additional car showroom space'. How I D Services was related to Frank Holland or Priory Motors has not been ascertained.



Figure 26 – Hollands of Cambridge (Priory Motors), circa late 1970s (CC)

In the 2000s, there were changes afoot. It appears that the garage/car wash/car sales business was becoming less feasible, and proposals for other uses were arising. By June 2007 an application for a 'full hoarding' around the site was granted. By August 2007, though, it appears that either the site was owned by the Co-operative Group or the latter had a controlling interest; in 2011 the site is identified in City Council communications as the 'former Herbert Robinson Ltd car dealership and motor show room'. It seems that the value of the site was bringing about rapid changes in ownership.



Figure 27 – Abandoned Holland Motors site c.2011
(D. H. Barford and Co – Cambridge City Council/Morton Removals)
(Cambridge City Planning Dept website, appIn 11.110.FUL)

With the site still not redeveloped there were opportunities, and proposals for comprehensive redevelopment schemes were made (see pp. 42–44 below). However, the old vehicle-related use wasn't quite shaken off, and in June 2011 an application was made by Morton Removals, represented by D H Barford and Co, for change of use to car valeting and hand car wash, with a portacabin. This was refused. Later, in September 2011 an application for the same use was made again by Morton Removals – as a temporary enterprise until some-

thing bigger came along. In both cases the proposals only concerned a portion of the land – primarily the Mill Road frontage. In assessment of the application, the City Council, stated 'Use (of the site) as a car wash is not in accordance with the provisions of the Cambridge Local Plan 2006, and if it continued for any significant period, might restrict the opportunities for co-ordinated development of the wider site'. The planning department recommended refusal, but permission was granted, on a temporary basis.

Clearly, new uses were being proposed for the site. The site was purchased by the Co-operative Group either in or a few years before 2007.

Kelly's Directory

The 1965/66 directory (see above) indicated some major changes in this part of Mill Road.

By 1967 there were some additional changes:

- 299 Patrick Barker
- 301/303 Gordon Barratt, newsagent
- 305 —
- 307 Andy Lee, motor cycle & scooter dealer, and repair specialist
- 309/313 Bowling Alley [Magnet]
- 315–349 Holland Motors, motor agents & Morris retail dealers, self-service petrol station.

It can be seen that Andy Lee has arrived on the scene at 307, replacing George Dyer, though the two were in much the same business.

From 1968 to 1975 the picture remained much the same, except that Holland Motors added 'Simca distributors' to its portfolio, and by 1973 Phyllis Barker had come to replace Patrick Barker at No. 299.

ROBERT SAYLE at the MAGNET SITE

Sieveking and Gooch, *A History of Robert Sayle* (2008, p. 59) states that in the mid-1970s the Robert Sayle shop (now John Lewis) was experiencing a serious need for storage space:

the land to the rear of Robert Sayle was subject to the compulsory purchase order which was the result of the city council's decision to redevelop Lion Yard car park. The shop lost around 11,500 square feet of stockroom and workroom space and it was therefore essential to obtain good alternative accommodation. [Several sites were looked at. It was identified that] there was suitable space immediately available at the old Magnet Bowling Alley in Mill Road [...].

The Magnet Bowling alley had closed in 1968 – and it is stated that several of the Robert Sayle partners remembered going bowling there in the early 1960s – and the Magnet company leased the premises to the Robert Sayle partnership in 1971. Initially, it was intended as a short-term solution, though occupation went on for thirty or so years.

Planning permission had been sought by the partnership in 1970 to change the use of the site to 'retail outlet servicing store'. It was granted in 1971, with some provisions: that the permission 'will operate for the benefit of the John Lewis Group only'; that permission expired in February 1976; that the premises cannot be used for wholesale or retail use. Moreover, the use of the site by the John Lewis Group 'shall not enure for the benefit of the land', and this was imposed so that 'the council may exercise full control over any subsequent use when the John Lewis Group finally vacates the premises' (Cambridge City Council).

Clearly, Robert Sayle was part of the John Lewis Group by 1970.

A History of Robert Sayle gives a good narration of its use of the site. The new premises accounted for approximately 19,000 sf of floor space, and initially the bowling lanes were used, giving 'fairly clear floor space'. The 'floor was sealed, the fluorescent lighting was modified and racking was installed to a height of six feet'. There was the need for five loading bays at the rear, and a regular van link was established from the site to the shop. The main merchandise was 'furniture, bedding, electrical appliances, kitchen and nursery furniture and gifts. Carpets were stacked in large tubes at the end of each row or racking.' After a fortnight of alterations, the building was 'able to function as a service building and stock was moved to Mill Road from the shop' (ibid, pp. 159–60).

In 1972 a space for an upholstery workroom arose. The partnership's ethic required the keeping of a 'permanent stock of different types of spring and old-fashioned forms of binding, hessian, webbing and horsehair' (horsehair had to be obtained from Belgium). The oldest piece of furniture sent to the workroom for re-upholstering was a piece from the time of Charles II.

In 1973 another loading bay was built at the front for city deliveries, and by 1973 there were 1,200 deliveries per week. Indeed, 'the merchandise there was so great that it started spreading out into the gangways [...] every bit of space possible was pressed into service, including old bowling alley cloakrooms which had previously been left unused' (ibid, pp. 160–61).

In 1974 twenty eight partners worked at the site, and a 'very good meal' at lunchtime could be had for 15p. By 1975/6 more storage space was required and all evidence of old bowling alleys was removed.

It may be assumed that planning permission was renewed by 1976, as by 1979 there were 17,875 deliveries (rising to 90,396 in 2000). In 1985 a new long-term lease on the building was taken, and there was some interest in purchasing the site, though it was not deemed 'financially or commercially sensible'.

In 1987, or thereabouts, the partnership proposed to extend the building, with planning permission being initially refused as neighbours objected to the proposed appearance and the lighting. The partnership amended the design and appealed, which was successful.

In 1988 a new carpet store was created – the Addlestone shed was bought from Taylor & Penton – and in 1996 additional racking was added. It seems, though, that the site was becoming congested as lorries and vans had to wait to enter, presumably in Mill Road. By 2004 there were moves for relocation to the present Trumpington site.

The Robert Sayle shop in St Andrew's Street closed in September 2004 and moved to new premises on Burleigh Street (formerly the Co-op, now (2018) Primark). In November 2007 the new John Lewis opened in the Grand Arcade, the Trumpington store (the equivalent to the Mill Road store) having opened for operations in 2004. By 2007, and possibly earlier, the site had become the property of the Stewart Milne Group Ltd.



Figures 28 & 29 – Robert Sayle (John Lewis) loading bays at back, and Mill Road exterior (Sieveking & Gooch, 2008, pp. 160, 164)



Figure 30 – Site after fire had damaged it after Robert Sayle/John Lewis had re-located (CC²)

In 2007 the City Council prepared a Development Brief for the two sites – Robert Sayle (309–313) and the Co-op (315–349) – intended to establish how the two dis-used sites should be developed. This Development Brief is discussed below, along with a look at the local planning history.

² [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:After_the_fire_\(1\)_-geograph.org.uk_-_1048694.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:After_the_fire_(1)_-geograph.org.uk_-_1048694.jpg)

II. 2000s: LOCAL PLANNING and the DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

The 2006 Local Plan combined the two sites (309–313 and 315–349) into Proposals Site 7.12, the 'Robert Sayle Warehouse and Co-op Site'. The site was identified as being suitable for 'mixed use housing development and community facilities. Could include a student hostel for Anglia Ruskin University on part of the site in lieu of affordable housing'. Furthermore, Policy 7.48 of the plan addressed Student Hostels for Anglia Ruskin University, and stated that:

it is the desire of Anglia Ruskin University to house as many of its students as possible in purpose-built hostel accommodation. The City Council encourages and supports this aim. Where new purpose-built student hostel accommodation is successfully provided the City Council will encourage the return of as many bed-spaces as possible held in private leased houses back to open housing market occupation.

Policy 7.49 stated that specific sites for such housing are identified and should be safeguarded – one of those sites was Site 7.12.

In July 2007 a Development Brief³ for Site 7.12 (identified as the Robert Sayle Warehouse and Co-op site) was submitted to the Council. Pointing to policies in the 2006 Local Plan, the Brief contained an indicative concept of desired future development.

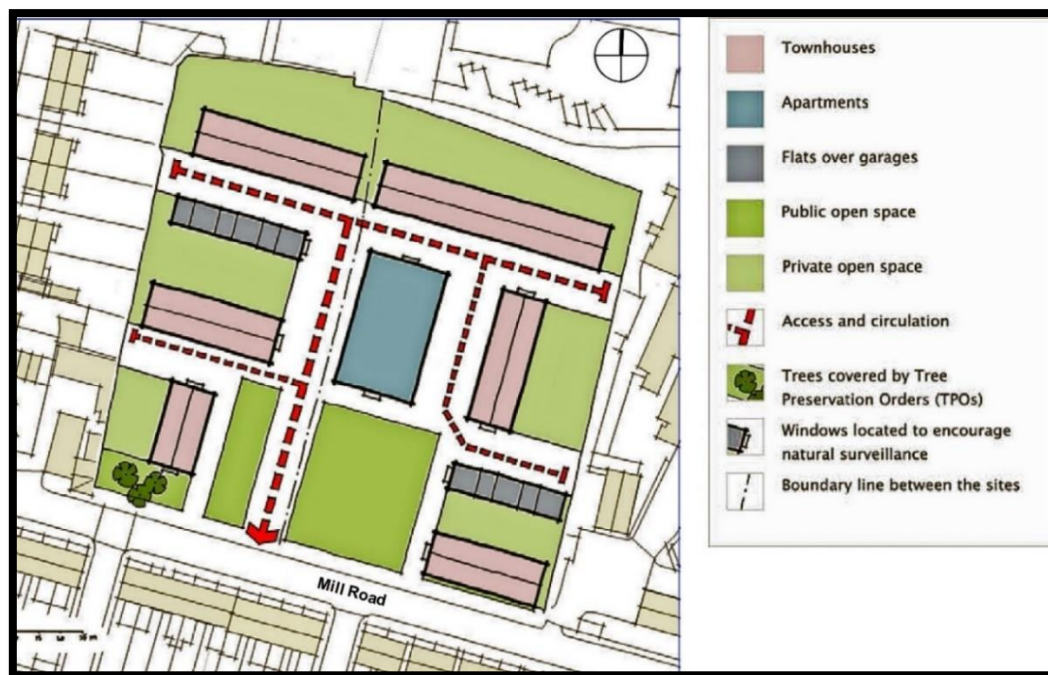


Figure 31 – Key development principles for proposal site 7.12, Mill Road (Robert Sayle Warehouse and Co-Op Site, Mill Road, Cambridge. Development Brief for Proposals Site 7.12 in the Cambridge Local Plan (2006))

It can be seen from this illustration that the Development Brief envisaged a low-density development, with generous open space, and a mix of residences and apartments. The scale and massing of any new development should complement the surrounding vernacular; there should be no over-shadowing; car-ownership should be minimised; public art should be included – equal to 1% of the capital costs; development should 'accord with Policy 5/5 "Meeting Housing Needs" identified in the Cambridge Local Plan (2006). As such the City

³ "Development Brief": Robert Sayle Warehouse & Co-op Site, Mill Road Cambridge. Development Brief for Proposals Site 7.12 in the Cambridge Local Plan (2006). Prepared by the Cambridge City Council Urban Design Team. July 2007.

Council will seek as affordable housing 40% or more of the dwellings'. The call for such 'affordable housing' came to be popular among local residents.

The Development Brief also contained a small reference to 'other uses identified in the Proposals Schedule [that] could be accommodated, including for example a care home (C2 residential use) on part of the site'.

In 2011 the City Council undertook an Appraisal of the Mill Road Conservation Area. The conservation area was effectively divided into two 'character' areas – one west of the railway bridge, and the other east of it. The Appraisal made no direct mention of the 309–349 site, but did draw attention to Brookfields Hospital, the main block being identified as a 'focal', though un-listed building. Notable is that the 'SW' block of buildings is in the Conservation Area but is not considered 'positive'.

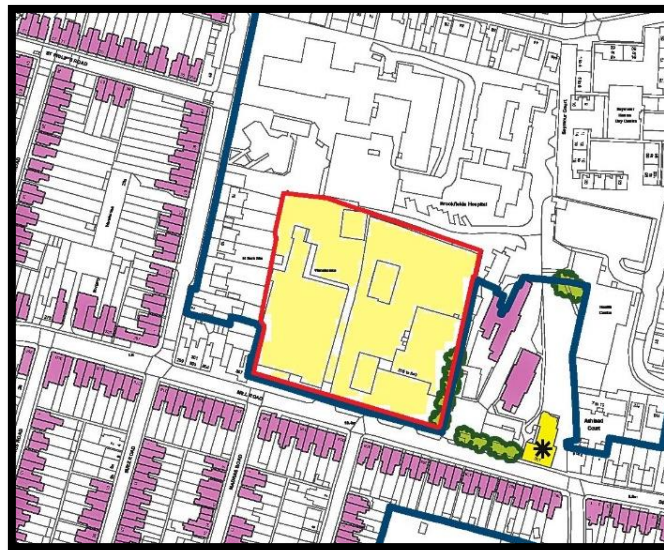


Figure 32 – 309–313 and 315–349 Mill Road excluded from Conservation Area, indicated by blue line. Purple buildings indicate 'positive un-listed buildings' (adapted from Mill Road Area, Conservation Area Appraisal, June 2011. Cambridge City Council)

While the document states that 'the former Robert Sayle Warehouse and Co-op site remains vacant and surrounded by hoardings' (p. 53), it also states:

at the time of designation in 1993 [date of the establishment of the original Mill Road Conservation Area], and again in the 1999 Appraisal, it was considered that the Romsey end of Mill Road beyond the railway bridge did not meet the statutory Conservation Area criteria of an 'area of special architectural or historic interest'. However, this area is now considered to be of enough value to meet these criteria. (p. 2)

The 2014 review of the 2006 Local Plan included the *Technical Background Document – Part 2 Supplement to Part 2, Site Options Within and on the Edge of Cambridge* (January 2013). Here the eastern part (315–349) of Proposals Site 7.12 was amalgamated with part of Brookfields Hospital to create Site R21. The western part (309–313) was excluded.

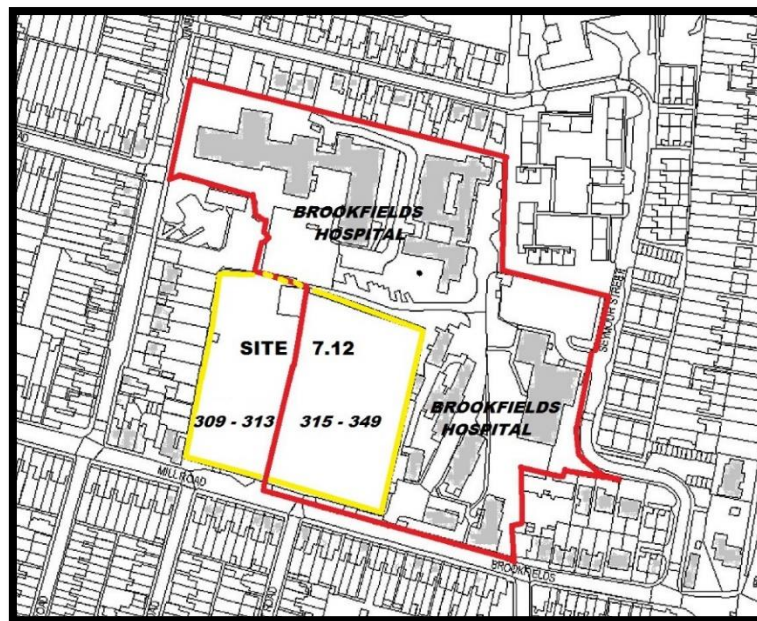


Figure 33 – Site R21 in red, showing Site 7.12 of 2006 Local Plan in yellow (adapted from Technical Background Document – Part 2 Supplement to Part 2 Site Options within and on the edge of Cambridge (January 2013), Cambridge City Council, May 2013)

The site description of the new R21 states:

this site on the Mill Road frontage was formerly occupied by Priory Motors and adjoins the former John Lewis warehouse to the west. The site includes Brookfields Hospital and other NHS buildings to the north, including a number of Buildings of Local Interest (BLI's) [...]. There is a planned mosque and community facilities (granted planning permission 11/1348/FUL) on the western side of the site on the site of the former John Lewis warehouse. The plot to the east forms the other part of the Local Plan 2006 allocation (mixed use) – Site 7.12.

So, 309–313 was excluded as it was already subject to planning permission – for the mosque.

The *Relevant Planning History* of the site clarifies matters, stating that part of the site was Allocation Site 7.12 in the 2006 Local Plan – for mixed-use housing and community facilities, possibility also for ARU student hostels. A proposal in 2007 for a one-hundred-bed care home with associated car parking and gardens was refused planning permission. The remainder of allocation site 7.12 (309–313) has planning consent for a place of worship (mosque) with community facilities, café, two social rented dwellings and associated development.

The *Conclusions for Submission* (to the emerging 2014) Local Plan stated that 'This site has been extended to include Brookfields Hospital site following representations received from the Brookfields site owners. The site area has increased to 2.87ha, residential capacity has increased to 128 with 100sq.m employment floorspace'. It appears from this statement that the 'Brookfields site owners' (the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust) was thinking of vacating the site.

The proposed uses of R21 was stated as 'Residential with up to 1000m2 employment floor-space'.

The *Draft Submission Plan* of the 2014 Local Plan introduced the designation of parts of Mill Road as an 'opportunity area'. Policy 23 of the *Draft Submission* stated that:

development proposals along [the] Mill Road Opportunity Area [...] will be supported if they add to the vitality and viability of the street and protect and enhance its unique character, including the development of arts and culture. Allocated sites with the potential to deliver new development include 315–349 Mill Road and Brookfields [...].

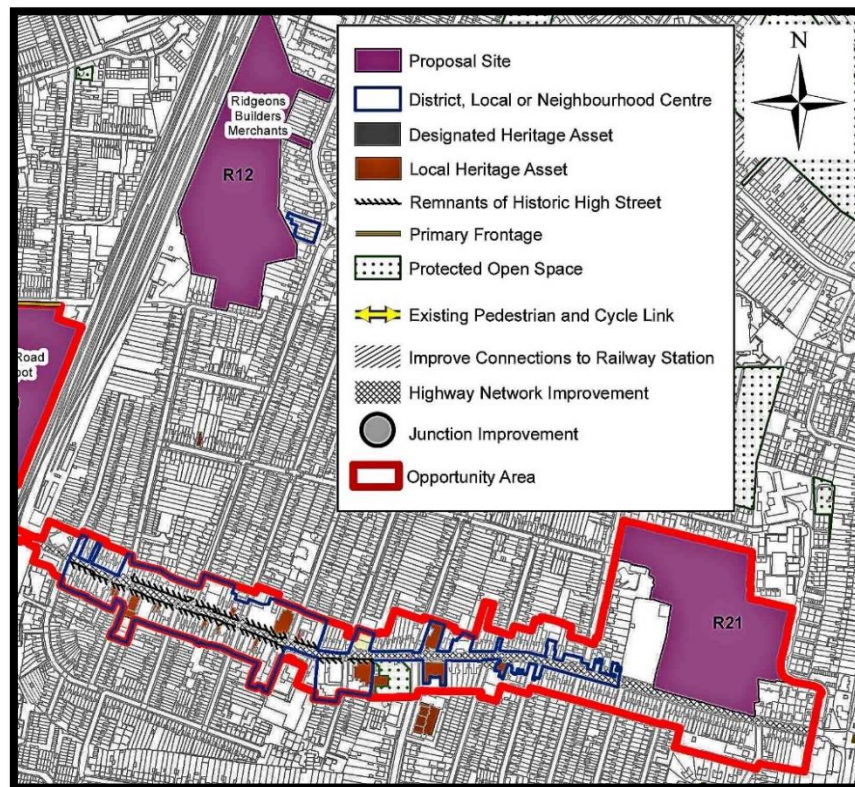


Figure 34 – Site R21 and Mill Road Opportunity Area
(Cambridge Local Plan 2014 Draft Submission Appendix A)

The Co-operative Estates Objection

The Co-operative Estates, in association with the McLaren Group, submitted an objection to proposals for Site R21 of the draft 2014 Local Plan. The Co-operative had purchased the old Holland Motors site and with McLaren was 'pursuing the development of student accommodation for Anglia Ruskin University in accordance with the current local plan allocation (July 2006) (Site No. 7.12)'.

The objection stated that the Co-operative Group (TCG) and McLaren had already been in discussion with the City Council on their plans for developing student accommodation, and were, presumably, confident that their proposal would be successful. Hence, the crux of the objection was that Policy R21 should:

be modified to include the existing 2006 allocation (Ref 7.12) wording ('mixed use housing development including a student hostel for Anglia Ruskin University on part of the site in lieu of affordable housing') to reflect TCG and McLaren Group's current proposal and make it clear that the expanded site R21 can be developed in phases. Development of the remaining Mill Road frontage allocated in the 2006 Local Plan can take place without prejudice to the redevelopment of Brookfields Hospital. The Mill Road frontage is suitable for student accommodation, as proposed in the 2006 Local Plan and is consistent with the criteria of draft Policy 46.

In essence, the Co-operative Group argued that the 315–349 part of site R21 should be designated for use as student housing while the remainder – the Brookfields Hospital part – could be developed for other uses (housing, affordable or otherwise, with employment and associated uses) as and when it becomes available.

The objection went on to state that student accommodation on the site will:

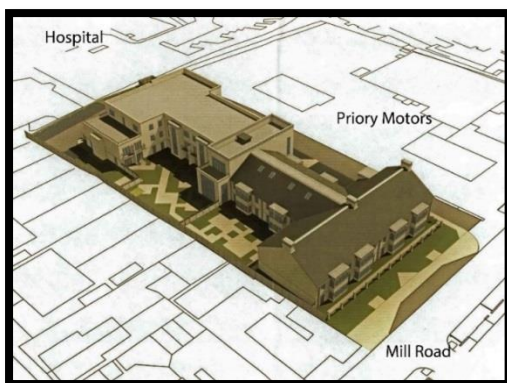
serve the identified needs of an academic institution; not result in the loss of existing market and affordable housing; be appropriately located for the purpose; be served by a frequent bus service on Mill Road; provide car-free accommodation; provide studio and townhouse accommodation to meet the various needs of students; and be managed in an appropriate way (subject to further consultation).

UNBUILT PROPOSALS

As can be seen in the planning statements above, and more particularly in the Co-op's objection, provision was made for 315–349 to be used fully or partly for student accommodation (there appears to be scope for interpretation on the exact meaning of the wording). Moreover, the 309–313 site had been identified in the 2006 Local Plan as suitable for 'mixed use housing development and community facilities', and this was reflected in the Development Brief. Consequently, proposals were submitted.

1: The Carebase Proposal for Nos 309–313

In June 2007 – seemingly one month before the Development Brief was drawn up – Carebase Ltd, a provider of care homes throughout the South East and East Anglia, submitted an application for the 309–313 site in association with the Stewart Milne Group (the owner of the land) for the erection of a one-hundred-bed care home. The agent was DWA Architects of York.



Figures 35 & 36 – Carebase proposal (Cambridge City Council)
https://idox.cambridge.gov.uk/onlineapplications/files/08A9EB46095327A4B004D1B825A08589/pdf/07_0644_FUL-925621.pdf

The care home was to a 'part two-storey, part three-storey 100 bed care home'. Approximately 100 staff would be employed. There would be twenty five car parking spaces. The development would meet the Council's planning requirements.

Seamus Halton, managing director of Carebase, wrote in a communication to the Council that a 'very successful public meeting' had been held at the Ross Street Community Centre in July, and that a dialogue had been opened with Romsey Action and the Romsey Garden Club 'in order to successfully address points raised'. Stating that the company was confident it had the support of local residents, Mr Halton hoped that Carebase would become an 'integral part of the Romsey and wider Cambridge neighbourhood'. In a subsequent response to the Council, Stephen Simpson, chair of East Mill Road Action Group (EMRAG), stated that 'despite what is claimed in the Carebase email, EMRAG – representing

the residents of Romsey – is confident that the proposal emphatically does not have the support of the local community. It also, incidentally, does not have the support of the Romsey Garden Club’.

In its assessment of the application, the council officer stated that:

the context of this site [taking 309–313 and 315–349 as one block – the 7.12 site in the 2006 Plan] also includes the disused car sales site [...] the local plan has allocated this site for residential development, and I consider it highly likely that an application for such development will come forward in the near future. In my view, the configuration of the proposed development disregards the need to ensure an appropriate relationship between buildings over the whole site. Were the Priory Motors site to be developed for residential purposes, possibly including an area of open space as envisaged in the Development Brief, the eastern elevation of the building proposed in this application would become a major component of the surrounding context, and would feature prominently in the outlook from dwellings, open space and circulation areas within the Priory Motors site.

Furthermore:

The proposal neglects the provisions of the [...] Development Brief in its failure to ensure that the scale and massing of the proposed building are sufficiently informed by those of the surrounding area, its failure to allow for a significant area of open space on the Mill Road frontage of the site, its failure to provide a co-ordinated approach to vehicular access from Mill Road to the wider site, and its failure to provide a context in which future residents of other residential developments within the wider site [...] could enjoy an acceptable outlook and a high-quality, attractive and stimulating living environment. For these reasons the proposal would be in conflict with the Robert Sayles Warehouse and Co-op Site Development Brief [...].’

The application was refused; the applicant made no appeal.

2: The Co-op Proposal

In August 2007, the Co-operative Group (represented by Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners) put forward a proposal⁴ for the ‘Former Priory Motors Site’ (315–349). This proposed ‘redevelopment for residential use and student housing’: twelve three-bedroom town houses, nineteen one-bedroom flats, twenty-four two-bedroom flats and seventy-two one-bedroom student accommodation units. The proposed design went through several drafts, from September 2006 to May 2007, all of them, essentially, playing with various ways to maximise the scale of development.



⁴ <https://idox.cambridge.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=JNJKANDX03Q00&activeTab=summary>.

Figure 37 – Massing of proposed Co-op 2007/08 development (315–349 Mill Road, Cambridge CB1 3DF. Proposals Site 7.12. Former Priory Motors Group Site. Design and Access Statement. May 2008. Co-Operative Group)

There was much discussion among concerned locals over the need to create ‘green space’ in this part of Mill Road, and indeed this was reflected as a central issue in the Development Brief. Yet it appears that what was proposed in the illustration above did not quite represent the scale of public green space sought. In November 2008 the application was withdrawn – the reason is not clear, and the lack of provision of green space may not have been the deciding issue.

It is interesting to note, especially with a view to the current (2017/18) development of the site, that in correspondence with the City Council Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners stated: ‘the scheme has been designed in accordance with the recently produced Development Brief that includes the site, and the Brief helped to guide the form and details of the scheme’ (CC: 08_0663_FUL—164808-2008).

In May 2008 it appears the Priory Motor Group proposed the re-development of the site for fifteen one-bedroom flats, ten two-bedroom flats, four three-bedroom town houses and six four-bedroom town houses, and fifty one-bed student accommodation units with associated car and cycle parking. The group clearly maintained an interest in the site. However, this application was also withdrawn – reasons again unclear.

THE MOSQUE

In October 2011 the *Guardian* newspaper published an article: ‘Cambridge mosque wins support from local non-Muslims’. It continued:

the Mill Road area of Cambridge has no landmarks or attractions and does not feature heavily on tourist guides to the city. But that could change if ambitious proposals for a £13m mosque get the green light. The mosque, designed by the London Eye architects, Marks Barfield, will not have minarets, but instead will attempt to answer the question of what an English mosque should look like. Aside from a gold dome, there are no external markings to signify its function. What it will have is a café and a women-only massage therapy room. But perhaps its most distinguishing feature is the support it enjoys from non-Muslims living and working in Mill Road who have been involved from the outset, even in the choice of architect and design.

The Muslim Academic Trust had, as stated in the planning application, purchased the site in May 2008.

The *Architect’s Journal* of October 2009, described it further. Marks Barfield’s design for the new £13-million mosque would be arrived at in liaison with Professor Keith Critchlow, a former professor of Islamic Art at the Royal College of Art in London. The design was based on the concept of an oasis, and will be:

truly inclusive, sustainable, safe, secure and respectful of the neighbourhood. It will be a landmark building which will inject new life into the Mill Road area of Cambridge of which the local and wider Cambridge community can be proud.

The article also stated that following consultation with local groups, Marks Barfield intended to submit the scheme for planning next year.

In November 2011 Marks Barfield Architects, on behalf of the Muslim Academic Trust, did submit an application to develop the 309–313 (Magnet/Robert Sayles, the west part of Site

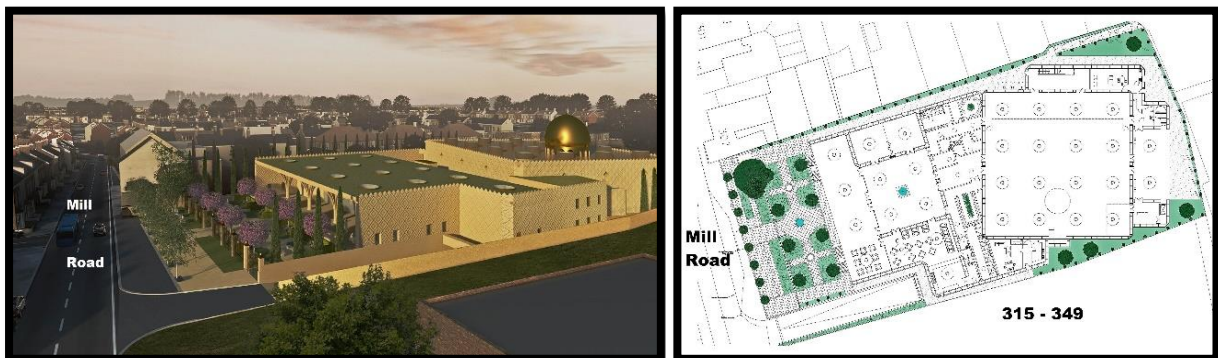
7.12 of the 2006 Local Plan) site for a mosque.⁵ In the Design and Access Statement – the principal explanatory document in a planning application – it was stated that:

the mosque complex is set back from Mill Road to the south allowing an extended community garden and a generously proportioned garden to be created at the entrance. Set in from its east, west and north boundaries a series of smaller landscaped areas are formed around the building, including a children's play area, thereby reducing its apparent scale, massing and impact on neighbouring properties. [...] The mosque complex consists mainly of accommodation over a generous single storey which is stepped on the skyline. A modestly sized gilt dome sits over the prayer hall on its eastern boundary.

The statement added that the mosque is designed to accommodate 1,000 worshippers at a time, and that that 'capacity will be reached on a few occasions per year at [the] most religious periods. On the basis that on a very busy day outside of the period of Eid and Ramadan there would be 700 or 800 people attending the mosque'. Consequently, concerning traffic generation, the figure of 10% car use at the current mosque in Mawson Road was applied, resulting in 70 to 80 car parking spaces, overspill being accommodated in the local road network within a one to five minute walk.

As regards design:

structural 'trees', evoking the 14th century English innovation of the fan vault, are used to create the main Mosque structure. The prayer hall orientation is towards and faces Mecca. The existing community garden area fronting Mill Road is extended and enhanced. The concept of the oasis is reinforced across the whole site with over 60 new trees creating a permeable green edge around the new building.



Figures 38 & 39 – Indicative perspective of mosque and floor plan
(Proposed Mosque, Mill Road, Cambridge Design and Access Statement.
Marks Barfield Architects. 4th Nov 2011.

The supporting Planning Statement by Bidwells,⁶ stated that:

the [current] Mawson Road Mosque opened in 1984 and served approximately 200 worshippers. By 2007 it welcomed more than 700 worshippers each Friday [the main prayer of the week] which necessitated additional space being used in the adjoining house in Tenison Road. This space too became inadequate and latecomers to Friday prayer resorted to praying on the street in Mawson Road whatever the weather. It became very apparent in 2007 that a new site had to be found [...]. In searching for an appropriate new site for the Mosque the Muslim Academic Trust needed to locate a suitable site within easy reach of where Cambridge Muslims live and work. Mill Road is a truly cosmopolitan mix of nationalities and religions with a high proportion of Muslims within this particular area; some working in local restaurants, driving taxis, running shops or studying in Cambridge. It is both sensible, sustainable and practical to keep the Mosque nearby.

⁵ CC: 11_1348_FUL-DESIGN_ACCESS_STATEMENT-733435.

⁶ CC: 11_1348_FUL-PLANNING_STATEMENT-733462.

The need for new space being somewhat similar to that expressed by Robert Sayle in the early 1970s.

The Design and Access Statement stated that there had been an international competition on the design. One of the short-listed designs was by 5th Studio, which presented a very different design from the winner. Assessed on subjective grounds, it could be contended that the design was somewhat bulky when viewed in relation to winning design.

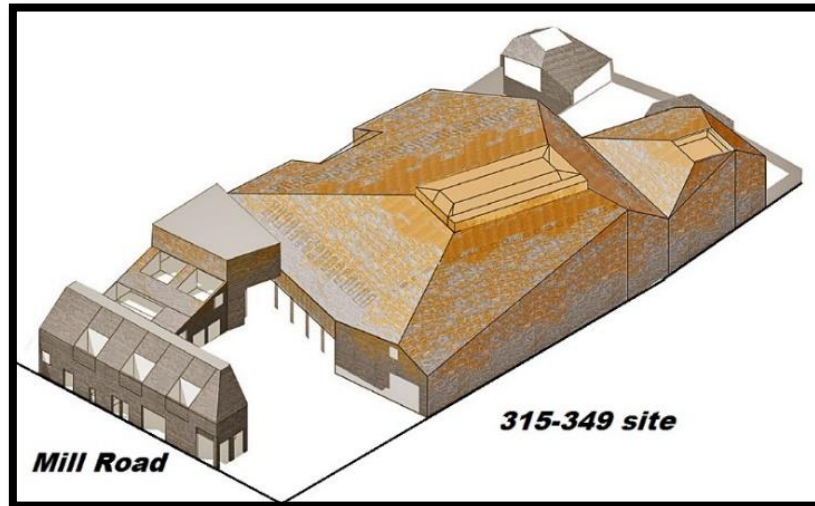


Figure 40 – 5th Studio design, set in local context (Mill Road Mosque Cambridge Client: Muslim Academic Trust Shortlisted Competition Entry, 2009.

5th Studio – Public Buildings and Community Facilities. Cambridge City Council)

1: Consultation

The consultation period, alluded to in the *Architect's Journal* and required in the planning approval process, led to some interesting comments.

While comments from statutory bodies and City Council departments were favourable, comment from the general public was diverse (there were over 300 comments from the public). In general, there was support for the use of the site for a mosque, the main complaints being about traffic, noise, over-shadowing, sound (due to a muezzin), out-of-keeping with the vernacular, construction disruption, and being disproportionate to actual need. Some responses called for the site to be developed for housing. It has been noted that several responses followed a set format that was favourable to the application, though who generated this has not been identified.

However, one response in particular noted that he or she was 'in a dilemma, as I certainly do not support, condone or feel enthused by the flier which was written in such a way as to border on bigotry'. This points to a campaign, of sorts, which was set in motion to object to the proposed development on religious/cultural grounds. An article in the *Cambridge News* of February 2017 (about the time construction was starting) stated:

a debate has raged over the construction of a massive new £15 million mosque in Cambridge [...] the city's MP says the mosque sends a clear message to the rest of the world that Cambridge is open and welcoming [...] some readers opposed the building while others welcomed it. The English Defence League (EDL) held a march and a rally in the city opposing its construction – but a counter-march by residents outstripped the number of protesters.

Many of the newspaper's readers were in support of the development, though some pointed to the following: the need for affordable housing; objection to any religious uses; traffic; the cultural threat presented by Islam. Several other objections became evident

through the City Council's assessment of the application, such as the continued use of the Mawson Road building and the effect of overcrowding on the local community.

The Muslim Academic Trust set up a website enabling the public to donate to the construction of the mosque: <https://www.justgiving.com/muslimacademic>. Contributions could be made to help 'build Europe's first eco-friendly and 1st purpose-built mosque within the historic and significant city of Cambridge, UK. Its mandate is to meet the needs of the Muslim community in the UK and beyond by facilitating good practice in faith, community development, social cohesion and interfaith dialogue'.

2: Approval

The winning Marks Barfield design went ahead for approval by the planning committee in November 2011, Bidwells being the agent. Recommendations put before the committee by the planning department praised: the layout and positioning on the site and its 'striking but well-adapted' design; its attention to sustainability; its capacity to cope with projected future demand; its compatibility with planning policy.

Furthermore, the recommendations added that:

the proposal would add to the special quality of the Mill Road section of City of Cambridge Conservation Area No.1 (Central), and complies with policy ENV6 of the East of England Plan 2008, policy 4/11 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2006), and government guidance in paragraph 137 of the Framework. [...] This is an exciting contemporary architectural proposal. The design team are to be complimented for their thoughtful and scholarly approach in the development of the scheme. Design features such as the gradual transition through a garden, a vestibule, and an atrium, into the main prayer hall; the overall building geometry, certain structural elements e.g. the laminated wood 'tree' columns, and the embedded artwork are noteworthy. It is hoped that sufficient resources will be available to deliver a build of the quality proposed. The Panel would also urge that dialogue be maintained with the owners of the neighbouring vacant plot in the interests of securing its redevelopment.

The application was, after one or two equivocations, granted full approval by the committee in May 2013, conditions mostly applying to the construction phase, particularly vis-à-vis opening to the public.

There have been several subsequent applications related to the original: the means of demolition of existing structures; a visitor centre; relocation of utility infrastructure.

Construction is currently (February 2018) underway.



Figure 41 – Construction in late February 2017, showing excavation for underground parking (photo: author)



Figure 42 – Construction in mid-February 2018 showing structural ‘trees’ (photo: author)

THE CAM FOUNDRY

As described above (pp. 38–42) 315–349 (the old Holland Motors site) was the eastern part of Site 7.12 of the 2006 Local Plan. This changed in the 2014 Local Plan review when it became part of Site R21, along with Brookfields Hospital. This reconfiguration was due to Nos 309–313 (the old Magnet/Robert Sayles) becoming subject to planning approval for the mosque.

The new Site R21 was designated for mixed use housing and community facilities, possibility also for Anglia Ruskin University student hostels. The Co-operative Group, owner of 315–349, lodged an objection to its part of Site R21 being lumped together with the hospital for mixed-use housing and community facilities, stating that the Co-op, with developers McLaren, was in negotiation with the Council to develop 315–349 exclusively for student housing (indeed, the subsequent 2014 Design and Access Statement – see below – itemised five prior meetings). They argued that mixed-use housing and community facilities could be accommodated on the hospital site, were that to come available.

As it happens, the hospital part of R21 did not become available, the mixed-use housing and community facilities have not been developed, and student housing on 315–349 is now (February 2018) almost complete.

The August 2007 application by the Co-op and McLaren for student housing was refused. In September 2014 another application was made, proposing a 3- to 4-storey student residential scheme providing accommodation for 301 student rooms.⁷ The name of the development – the Cam Foundry – is taken as a reference to the site’s previous occupation by Macintosh. Indeed, McLaren advertised for:

expressions of interest [...] from artists [...] to develop a site-specific artwork, or series of artworks. The artwork should enhance the setting for the new student accommodation and reference the unique heritage and context of Mill Road. There is a vibrant cultural and business scene within Mill Road and engagement with the community and students at Anglia Ruskin University throughout the development process is a requirement.

The work, architectural glass by Kirsty Brooks, is now (June 2018) installed.

⁷ CC: 14_1496_FUL-DESIGN_AND_ACCESS_STATEMENT_-_PART_1_4-1624476.

The Design and Access Statement for this application extended to four sections, with the scheme's architect T P Bennet going into extensive detail. It explained that there had been several concepts of the design, particularly with regard to the neighbouring mosque and the conservation area.

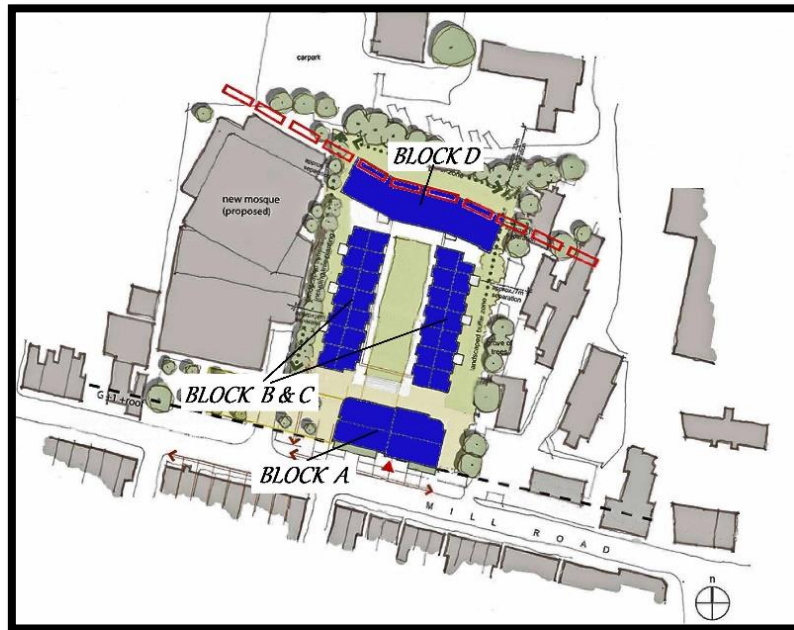


Figure 43 – Proposed, and finally approved, layout (T P Bennet/McLaren)

1: Design

Twenty-one 'studio accommodation' units were proposed for Block A, facing Mill Road, 'townhouses' for Blocks B and C (on the sides – facing the mosque and the hospital), and 'en suite' units in Block D at the back. In the centre there would be an open square. As the development was designed to be car-free, provision was made for bicycle parking.

The Statement went on to maintain that the:

proposed scheme will enhance the setting of Mill Road by the following improvements: completion of the street frontage to the east side towards Brookfields, [and the] proposed massing corresponds in part both to the 2-storey and roof residential buildings directly opposite and the 3-storey and roof element located along Mill Road's northern frontage in order to provide a coherent and balanced urban design composition.

Concerning the material appearance:

the proposed elevations correspond to the elevational rhythm established by the neighbouring terraced houses. The proposed street frontage will deploy well-proportioned and detailed windows which will maintain and enhance the predominant bay rhythm in the street to create a coherent and harmonious streetscape. In addition the verticality of the bay elements provide[s] an effective visual counterpoint to the horizontal length of the building in order to provide urban form in keeping with its immediate urban setting.

That the building 'corresponds to the elevational rhythm' could be disputed. The central reception block facing Mill Road is bulky, and takes its height from the largest Brookfields Hospital building. The inner blocks could be described as barracks-like.



Figure 44 – Proposed elevation fronting Mill Road (Cambridge City Council/T P Bennet/McLaren)

2: Traffic

As the development was intended to house a large number of students, traffic management was an obvious issue to be addressed, and a transportation study was undertaken by Bancroft Consulting.

The 'car-free' nature of the development will be managed through implementation of a specific set of procedures and policies to control how users travel to the site, which will be implemented by the future operator. This includes a 'no-car' policy for students as part of the tenancy agreement, meaning they cannot own a car within the City during their residency. The policies also cover on-site disabled parking, servicing, and arrangements for drop-off on move-in/move-out days.

Arriving occupants would be supplied with a Travel Plan Welcome Pack, and management staff would be responsible for 'monitoring student travel behaviour to ensure that no residents are using a motor vehicle whilst living at the site'.

3: Community Engagement

Engagement with local interests was undertaken by Meeting Place Communications, and the public meetings were held at the Ross Street Community Centre. As reported in the *Cambridge News* 26 March 2014, much concern was expressed about the amount of student housing being developed in Cambridge, often at the expense of opportunities to build family housing. Furthermore, the Muslim Academic Trust stated: 'our preference is for a mixed scheme of a lower density, to include residential family and young couple accommodation', and that McLaren should 'strive to match and complement the massing, materials and design values of our own structure'.

The resulting Statement of Community Engagement itemised the meetings held, with the East Mill Road Action Group, the new mosque, and local councillors, and two public consultation sessions (at the Mill Road Baptist church or the Ross Street Community Centre?). Noting that over eighty people attended the public meetings, it seems that opinion was gauged only through the twelve written responses the consultants received. Asked whether they were supportive of the proposals, five responded 'yes', two 'no' and five 'supportive with reservations'.

4: The planning department's decision

The application for development went before the Planning Committee in March 2015. The Planning Officer's recommendation was for refusal, based, in summary, on the proposal's being contrary to both the adopted and the emerging Development Plans on the following grounds:

It would fail to provide any housing to meet identified housing need and is contrary to policies 5/1, 7/9 and site allocation 7.12 in the Proposals Schedule of the Cambridge Local Plan 2006. The emerging Local Plan is at an advanced stage of preparation and the proposal would be contrary to it

and premature, prejudicing and cumulatively reducing the Council's ability to meet housing need over the lifetime of the Cambridge Local Plan 2014: Proposed Submission.

More straightforwardly:

not enough open space is provided on site, there is a shortfall in public informal open space provision locally and student use of such spaces would unreasonably intensify their use [... it] does not include a public art delivery plan [... it] would fail to secure a S106 planning obligation to secure mitigation in terms of indoor and outdoor formal open space, transport measures, occupancy restrictions and monitoring.

The application was refused by the Planning Committee in March 2015, on the grounds given above and on the additional grounds that it failed to make sufficient provision for sport for the occupants, that it failed to include sufficient restrictions on car use or ownership, and that did not make adequate provision for highway improvements and travel management.

5: The appeal

McLaren and the Co-op Group, represented by M Pegasus Planning Group of Bristol, appealed the Council's decision and a public inquiry was held in December 2015. Essentially, all parties defended their original position and it appears that the over-riding factors were, in brief, interpretations of the validity of the then prevailing Local Plan – the 2006 Local Plan and/or the emerging revision of that plan, ostensibly the 2014 review, that had not yet gained official approval. It could be argued that the initially refused, and now appealed, application fell between two stools.

The Planning Inspector was John Chase, MCD DipArch RIBA MRTPI. Issues which he identified as relevant to the appeal were: provisions and validity of the current Local Plan (2006); prevailing National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF); housing supply; student accommodation; the emerging Local Plan (2014).⁸

Concerning the NPPF (the Whitehall policy statement that determines what issues local plans should address), he stated that it requires a local planning authority to 'identify a five year supply of deliverable housing land to meet the full, objectively assessed need'. The emerging (2014) Cambridge Local Plan objectively assessed that need as 14,000 dwellings, up to the year 2031. The inspector stated that the Council was able to demonstrate that it can meet its five-year supply, so 'there is no obligation created by the NPPF to safeguard land for housing beyond the five year timeframe.' Hence, the site was not required for housing.

Nonetheless, the inspector discounted the Pegasus/McLaren assertion that as the site was estimated by the Council as only able to accommodate thirty dwellings, its significance in meeting overall housing need was immaterial. The inspector stated that were such a rule to be generally applied it would have a negative impact on the overall supply of housing land.

The inspector did, however, point to Planning Practice Guidance which allows student accommodation to be considered as contributing to general housing requirement – by releasing houses from student occupation and making them available for non-students. He referred to data used by Cambridgeshire County Council which show a ratio of 3.5 student places to one house. Hence the 270 bed spaces proposed would release approximately 77 houses.

⁸ CC: Appeal Ref: APP/Q0505/W/15/3035861 315-349 Mill Road, Cambridge, CB1 3NN.

The Inspector's decision, finally delivered in March 2016,⁹ was 'the appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for student housing consisting of 270 rooms, communal areas, bicycling parking, refuse store, plant room, office, new substation, infrastructure and access [...]'.



Figures 45 & 46 – Construction in early 2018 (photo: author)

6: McLaren and CRM Students

Scheduled to open in summer 2018, the Cam Foundry is now (March 2018) advertised as operated by CRM Students – a major provider of Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) throughout the UK. CRM has been purchasing McLaren-built developments in several locations. According to the *Estates Gazette*, one of the major investors in CRM is LetterOne, an international investment company established in 2013 by Mikhail Fridman, an extremely wealthy Russian oligarch. Marketing the Cam Foundry is Aparto, part of the international real estate business Hines (of Texas, USA). Aparto has been established by Hines specifically for the student housing market. According to the website Europe Real Estate:

in April 2016, funds managed by Hines entered into a £150m funding agreement of six prime development sites from McLaren Property comprising sites in Cambridge, Oxford, Kingston, Aberdeen and two locations in Brighton. There is an operating partnership in place with CRM Student, which will continue during the phased roll-out of this portfolio.

The Cam Foundry/CRM/Aparto website describes the Mill Road PBSA thus:

[L]ocated in the residential east of the town, The Cam Foundry features a selection of bespoke private studios, en-suite rooms in friendly shared flats and townhouse rooms. With fully fitted kitchens and ensuite bathrooms, as well as ample communal space the Cam Foundry is the perfect residence for any student in Cambridge. With an outdoor courtyard and townhouse gardens, there is plenty of outdoor space for you to relax in.

Accommodation units are advertised as ranging from £182 to £270 per week, all on a minimum fifty-one-week lease.

⁹ CC: Appeal Decision. Inquiry held on 1 to 3 December 2015. Site visit made on 3 December 2015 by John Chase MCD DipArch RIBA MRTPI, an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. Appeal Ref: APP/Q0505/W/15/3035861 315-349 Mill Road, Cambridge, CB1 3NN. 11th March 2016.

STUDENT ACCOMMODATION

The provision of student accommodation has, over the last decade or so, become a highly lucrative business. Several large enterprises are involved, such as CRM Students, Student Roost, Unite Students, UPP, and many more. PBSA blocks have been developed throughout the city.

An article in the *Independent* newspaper (18 May 2015) illustrates much of the nature of the growing phenomenon:

Stewart Moore of CRM Students, the UK's leading independent student accommodation manager, with more than 19,000 student beds in 23 cities, [says] these PBSAs are hotels, of sorts: 'They're hospitality led and branded like hotels. In fact, we're hiring our managers from the hospitality sector'.

James Pullan, Knight Frank's head of student property, says the PBSA phenomenon took off about 15 years ago. 'Unite [which has about 20 per cent of the market] was an early player.' Now there are about 460 developments on CRM's site from 50-odd providers. Many have natty names and brands: Unilife, Liberty, Prodigy Living [...] and the sector is growing at a rate of knots. The developer Knight Knox has completed eight PBSAs since late 2012, mostly in Leeds, Liverpool and Manchester. There's a fierce market of buyouts and leasing.

It's easy to see the reason for these blocks. Student numbers have almost doubled since the 1990s, and the current cohort includes around 1.5 million from overseas, who [...] want peace, quiet and user-friendliness over parties, booze and squat-chic pinned-up curtains. '[PBSAs] are mostly for international students and postgraduates, whose numbers have risen ten-fold in the last 10 to 15 years,' says Pullan. 'They prefer "plug and play" accommodation. They don't want hassle, like sorting out their own council tax. Nor do their parents, who are paying.'

'PBSAs are mainly let to first year and overseas students,' says Simon Tyrell of Oxford student-letting agency Finders Keepers. 'UK-based second and third year students still prefer shared houses.' But you can see the point of the international set. With wi-fi, services, security, the chance to study together – and avoid the sheer aggravation of poring over Gumtree for mouldy places – a PBSA is a problem-solver.

Cambridge, with its two universities and numerous colleges and schools, is experiencing a rapid expansion of PBSAs throughout the city – at an initial count there appears to be between ten and twelve, or more, as there are several in the pipeline. As has been pointed out by numerous community groups, these developments often come at the expense of land for family housing.

The concept pointed to by the appeal inspector regarding the Planning Practice Guidance and its inclusion of student accommodation in the general definition of 'housing', has been questioned by the City Council, seemingly primarily through the *Assessment of Student Housing Demand and Supply for Cambridge City Council*, by Burgess, Jones and Hamilton of the Cambridge Centre for Housing and Planning Research (January 2017).

This report estimates that there is a need for some 6,000 rooms in new purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA) if existing housing stock shared by students is to be returned to the open housing market. There is an issue about the location of any new PBSA. There is a strong case for defining the areas in which new PBSA will be acceptable, rather than allowing speculative developments to become 'pepper potted' across the city. This would enable greater control over issues such as car parking.

This assessment became reflected in the Council's *Further Proposed Modifications to the emerging Cambridge Local Plan: Student Accommodation, Gypsies and Travellers, and Accessible Homes* (January 2017).

The City Council is not seeking through the Local Plan to provide purpose built student accommodation for all of the existing resident student population. The student accommodation study [the Burgess, Jones and Hamilton report] identifies that the University of Cambridge is looking to grow by a further 2,874 students to 2026. While Anglia Ruskin University has confirmed that it has no growth aspirations to 2026, a number of the other institutions in Cambridge have stated aspirations to grow. These institutions have a total growth figure to 2026 of 230 students. This gives rise to a total growth figure for the universities and the other institutions of 3,104 to 2026. Taking into account student accommodation units under construction or with planning permission, allocations in the Local Plan and the remaining allocation at North West Cambridge, these sources of supply would address and go beyond the growth figure of 3,104 and would provide flexibility. Any provision over and above these sources of supply would need to be considered on its merits against the criteria in Policy 46 and having regard to the absence of any policy requirement at either national or local level for all students to be provided with purpose built student accommodation.

Policy 46 of the emerging Local Plan states:

Proposals for new student accommodation will be permitted if they meet identified needs of an existing educational institution within the city of Cambridge in providing housing for students attending full-time courses of one academic year or more. Applications will be permitted subject to:

- there being a proven need for student accommodation to serve the institution;
- the development not resulting in the loss of existing market housing and affordable housing;
- it being in an appropriate location for the institution served;
- the location being well served by sustainable transport modes;
- having appropriate management arrangements in place to ensure students do not keep cars in Cambridge;
- rooms and facilities being of an appropriate size for living and studying; and
- if appropriate, being warden-controlled to minimise any potential for antisocial behaviour.

The loss of existing student accommodation will be resisted unless adequate replacement accommodation is provided or it is demonstrated that the facility no longer caters for current or future needs.

In the instance of institutions where students do not attend full-time courses of one academic year or more these institutions will be expected to provide residential accommodation for their students within their own sites; make effective use of existing student accommodation within the city outside term time; or use home-stay accommodation.

The Council stated in early 2017 that Policy 46 has not yet been the subject of examination hearings on approval of the emerging Local Plan.

OTHER PROPERTIES

The 'SW' block of properties (Nos 299, 301, 303, 305 and 307 Mill Road) have also undergone some considerable change in the period of the re-development of the Magnet and Holland Motors site.

In 1975 (the last to be published), Kelly's Directory gives the picture thus:

- No. 307: Andy Lee, motor-cycle & scooter dealer, & repair specialist, having taken over from the earlier George Dyer
- No. 305: —
- No. 301/303: Gordon Barratt was running a newsagent business
- No. 299: Phyllis Barker had taken over from Patrick Barker, seemingly not running the butchers business originally established by Walter Childs.

1: No. 307

Andy Lee developed the motor-cycle business. Records held by the Council¹⁰ reveal that in 1973 he lodged an application for the erection of a motor-cycle showroom, and this was approved in April 1974. Further applications and approvals in 1976, 1977 and 1978 were lodged, including a new shop front, seemingly to consolidate the business. Indeed, in May 1977 *Cambridge Evening News* reported him as stocking BMW and Suzuki bikes, and having a ‘fully equipped workshop with trained staff’.

Nonetheless, in 1994 there was an application for change of use from motor-cycle sales and repair to bicycle sales and repair. It must have been around this time that Lloyd Townsend (presumably of the Townsend’s Light Blue Cycles of Chesterton) took over the business. The application was permitted. In 2004 another application was submitted for the temporary (three-year) change of use from office to a one-bedroom flat, presumably upstairs. This was approved, and it is likely the change of use went ahead.

However, in 2015 Ison Distribution Ltd (Townsend’s company) applied, through Eclipse Planning Services, for approval for ‘demolition of an existing retail unit, associated workshop, storage and office and erection of 7 flats, together with associated access, landscaping, drainage and infrastructure works’.



Figures 47 & 48 – Left: application (2015) for redevelopment of No. 307.
Right: Mill Road elevation of 2018 application¹¹

This was permitted in June 2016, though not acted upon. A subsequent application was made in February 2018, this time for nine flats – six one-bed units, two two-bed units and one three-bed unit, otherwise with minimal changes to the 2016 proposal. The application was again made through Eclipse Planning Services, this time on behalf of Yellow Fish Ltd. The marketability of small dwellings was stated as the reason for the nine units, rather than the earlier seven. The application received approval in June 2018, and construction is currently underway (September 2018). As can be seen in Figure 47 above, the development considerably densifies the use of what was Andy Lee’s back yard, yet should create a form of green buffer to the west of the mosque.

¹⁰ <https://idox.cambridge.gov.uk/online-applications/propertyDetails.do?activeTab=relatedCases&keyVal=000PSY00LI000>.

¹¹ <https://idox.cambridge.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=P3J5YKDXIT000>.



Figure 49 – No. 307 in January 2018
(photo: author)



Figure 50 – No. 307 in late March 2018
(photo: author)

2: No. 305

In January 1964 the executors of S J Chapman (Stephen Chapman had been recorded as a coal merchant at 305 since 1929, though by the 1960s the picture had become unclear) applied to the Council for a change of use of the premises to 'commercial purposes' and/or the 'extension of use for light industrial use to the whole site'. The application was refused. However, an application in November 1967 for change of use to shop use, with the use of the rear yard for storage, was permitted, though whether or not this proceeded is not known. In January 1968 an application was lodged by persons unknown to convert the property to flats, with the yard to be used as a motor repair workshop. Again, the outcome is unclear, though seemingly at the same time an application by G A Barratt (of 301/303 Mill Road) to convert the property into two self-contained flats with garages was permitted. For some undetermined reason, this was permitted again in October 1970, though it appears that it was not acted upon.

In December 1984, an application by T Gledhill was permitted for a change of use from residential to kitchen showroom on the ground floor, and flat on the first floor. This was followed in January 1985 by approval for the installation of a new shopfront, again by T Gledhill.

The kitchen showroom business must have, in time, run its course as in June 2016 an application was made by DPA Architects on behalf of Dylan Wade-Gledhill for the 'demolition of 4 existing storage garages to the rear of the site. The subsequent construction of 5 new dwellings and alterations to an existing flat'.

According to the Design and Access Statement four new 'lettable' residential units would be created on the site of the existing yard, garages and entrance to the side and rear of the existing building, with a fifth unit in the roof space of both the existing building and the new one to the side. The existing lettable flat on the first floor would be reconfigured. A courtyard, of sorts, would be created amid the new units.

The frontage has been designed to consist of an extension to the existing Victorian terrace continuing the existing visual language with matching windows, lintels and brickwork features at first floor level, whilst the eaves and ridge heights of this frontage will match those of the existing Victorian Terrace.



Figure 51 – Top: proposed elevation of No. 305 with No. 307 undeveloped. Bottom: proposed elevation with re-developed No. 307 (Cambridge City Council/DPA Architects)¹²

The proposal received full planning permission, and construction work is underway (early March 2018). Double gates will be erected at the entrance to the courtyard and flats in the interior.

3: Nos 301/303

In January 1969 Gordon Barratt, who had been operating as a newsagent at the premises since around 1955, lodged an application, and received approval, to revise the shop front. Again, in January 1970 Mr Barratt was granted approval for enlargement of the shop, the development of a self-contained upstairs flat and the rebuilding of garages. In November 1983 an application, this time by Mr and Mrs J Douglas, to alter the existing shop and flat above was permitted. In November 1998 an application by George Davidson (of 251 Mill Road) for a change of use from a shop to a food and drink outlet was refused.

In November 2000, an application by Mr P Montique and Ms L Morton (the address given including both 301 and 303) for the installation of internally-lit projecting box sign was refused, as being considered detrimental to the character of the building and the neighbourhood. In May 2007, a further application for the installation of illuminated signs was again refused, but then permitted in August, assumedly after alterations.

At some undetermined point in this time-line the premises came under the Spar name, after which it came under the One Stop name. However, it has not been established when the change of use of the property to shop plus food and drink outlet was approved, and clarification is required over whether this occurred while it was a Spar, or when it became a One Stop. The property quite evidently gained a Subway concession – definitively a food take-way outlet – around this time. Nonetheless, in early 2016 One Stop Stores (based in Walsall) submitted an application to install illuminated fascia signs and window graphics. At the time of writing, the application has not been determined.

¹² Design, Access and Heritage Statement. Construction of 9No. Flats Following Demolition of Existing Shop and Storerooms. 307 Mill Road. Eclipse Planning Services. 2018.



Figures 52 & 53 – Nos 301–303 as Spar shop (with Subway), and as One Stop shop (photos: author)

4: No. 299

This property has been subject to no planning applications as recorded by the City Council. It did have a shop (first a dairy, then grocer/confectioner, and lastly a butcher) yet this appears to have come to an end in the period 1940–48, after which it appears to have become simply a dwelling, albeit with some alteration and a new back-yard dwelling.



Figure 54 – No. 299 Mill Road (Vinery House) viewed from Vinery Road
(note new dwelling at back of yard) (photo: author)

CONCLUSION

Mill Road will continue to be developed, and the proposed permutations will be many and various. Placing the frontage of Mill Road under Conservation Area status can be viewed as an initiative to maintain a physical cohesiveness, yet social cohesion is more difficult to sustain. Economic change will take place as the market determines, as can be seen in the changes recorded in this report. Nonetheless, I believe that a community – defined as consisting of those living within a distinct area – should be able to express its views on how development is undertaken, and have those views taken into account. As such, the community of Romsey Town should find a means to define, in terms of land use, what is and what is not, acceptable.

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316	Macintosh and Sons Ltd of Cambridge, ironmongers, collection 1817–1936
316/B9A:	Rents on property owned by A. Macintosh and Sons, and accounts of outlay on property
316/E	Estate papers, 1920–1930, Macintosh and Sons Ltd of Cambridge, ironmongers
CB/2/TR/2/3/125	Claim of William Macintosh for a Cam foundry, 1929
CB/2/SE/3/9/20610	Building byelaw plan and approval for internal alterations to form store, Mill Road, 1954
CB/2/SE/3/9/28649	Building byelaw plan and approval for storage and sale of yeast and grain, garage and motor repairs sale of petrol, oils, motor showroom. 315/349 Mill Road, 1962
SP20/81	Cambridge: Stock in trade of Messrs A. Macintosh & Sons Ltd, 349 Mill Road, 1962
SP20/65	Cambridge: 19 buildings of Messrs A. Macintosh & Sons Ltd, 349 Mill Road, with stock in trade and goodwill, etc. With plan, 1962

ROMSEY TOWN CEMENT AND LIME CO.

CB/2/SE/3/9/435	Building byelaw plan and approval for shedding and mill, Mill Road 11 Jun 1891
CB/2/SE/3/9/1512	Building byelaw plan and approval for additions, Mill Road 20 Apr 1899
CB/2/SE/3/9/1532	Building byelaw plan and approval for cement kilns, Mill Road 18 May 1899
CB/2/CL/17/17/p.485	Contract for sale of land at Vinery Road between The Romsey Town Cement and Lime Co. Ltd., with others, and the Mayor Aldermen and Burgesses of Cambridge 16 Aug 1913 [long indenture, recites history from 1895]
1026/SP218	John Cowell Bequest Cambridge sale particulars: Mercantile premises known as The Romsey Town Cement & Lime Works, Including fixed machinery and a valuable plot of land, the whole comprising an area of 3 acres, Mill Road, Romsey Town, Cambridge. With plan. 24 May 1919
CB/2/SE/2/2/2/64	Block Plan showing Infectious Diseases Hospital and site of Romsey Town Cement Company, on tracing paper, Borough Surveyor Guildhall, 20 th century
CB/2/SE/2/2/2/63	Suggested layout for Isolation Cubicle block, single story. Infectious Diseases Hospital on paper, 1937

TURPIN, 309 AND 313 MILL ROAD

CB/2/SE/3/9/5033	Building byelaw plan and approval for open shed (temporary), Mill Road 26 Sep 1918
CB/2/SE/3/9/4131	Building byelaw plan and approval for stables and saw mill, Mill Road 22 Jan 1920
CB/2/SE/3/9/4936	Building byelaw plan and approval for bungalow and 2 shops, Mill Road 27 Sep 1923
CB/2/SE/3/9/6050	Building byelaw plan and approval for greenhouse and potting shed, Mill Road 12 May 1927
CB/2/TR/2/3/99	Claim of John Turpin for saw mill at 313 Mill Road 15 Oct 1928
515/SP2320	Bidwell and Sons, Cambridgeshire: sale particulars for 309 and 311 Mill Road 1960
515/SP1772	Bidwell and Sons, Cambridgeshire: sale particulars 301, 303, 305 Mill Road; 2 and 4 Vinery Road; all in Cambridge 1943

Cambridgeshire Collection, Central Library

(The following pictures show up in the catalogue.)

ROMSEY TOWN CEMENT & LIME CO: THE KILNS, THE PIT, THE MACHINE & CHIMNEY HOUSES

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P.ROM.K01 9786
P.ROM.K01 9787